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Vol. 38, No. 13

DECEMBER 28, 1955

10 CENTS

If Christmas Be Kept

By GRACE NOLL CROWELL

If CHRISTMAS be kept a splendid shining thing,
Sacred and holy in the hearts of men;
If there be selfless gifts that we can bring
To the poor and needy, truly never again
Need we be quite bereft—though ills betide,
And dangers threaten us, for there will be
A heavenly brightness moving by our side,
And hope will spring in hearts eternally.

The Light of the world is centered in the hour
That gave the Christ Child to the waiting earth.
His star still blooms—a radiant silver flower
As a glorious sign and symbol of his birth.
If men keep shining, steadfast faith in Him,
They can walk the earth by light that will not dim.

The LUTHERAN — News Magazine of the United Lutheran Church in America

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY by the United Lutheran Publication House, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylva H. Torrey Walker, Business Manager. C. A. Bongarzone, Circulation and Advertising. John E. Boyson, Associ Circulation Manager

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND RENEWAL ORDERS

are to be sent to Circulation Department, **The LUTHERAN**, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa. Please allow four to six weeks for changes to become effective. To insure accuracy on changes of address, please include present address sticker together with your new address.

Subscription Price, $3.50 a Year. Copyright, 1955, by the United Lutheran Publication House. Printed in U.S
Entered as second-class matter, October 29, 1923, at the Post Office, Phila., Pa., under act of March 3, 18

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THE CHURCH IN THE NEWS

Christmas, 1955

The miracle of Christmas again cast its spell over most of the civilized world this week. Thoughts of peace and good will were in the minds of worshipers who trudged to midnight services along snow-covered paths in northern climes. Farther south, a waxing moon lighted the way for churchgoers as they went to pay homage to the Christ-child. In the Holy Land, the traditional Christmas truce permitted pilgrims to travel from Jerusalem past barbed-wire barriers to the shrines erected near the spot where a Saviour came to earth as a tiny babe, so many years ago.

Even the calendar came to the aid of those who had popularized the "Put Christ Back into Christmas" slogan. With the festival falling on a Sunday, religious programs were the order of the day, with secular events postponed until Dec. 26.

Services in the Air Force's Northeast Command were attended by a visitor who represented America's churches — Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, president of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Blake visited servicemen and their families in lonesome outposts in Newfoundland, Labrador and Greenland to bring greetings from their home churches. Last year he spent Christmas in Korea on a similar mission.

How to give good gifts

With the nation's economy at record levels, Christmas spending reached new highs in the U.S. and Canada. A Dallas department store offered a $75,000 bejeweled Christmas card and a New York furrier suggested as a suitable gift a pair of chinchilla fur toreador pants—also at $75,000. But if these were ever purchased and given, it's doubtful if the brought the happiness that must hav come with some less-striking but mor meaningful gifts.

Twenty farm boys in Puerto Rico eac received a heifer for Christmas, gifts fro twenty students at Westminster Seminar in Maryland. The seminarians collecte the herd through appeals in rural co gregations where they conduct service They trucked the animals to Baltimor where they were shipped to Puerto Ric by Heifer Project, a relief organizatio sponsored by 13 church groups whic has been sending livestock and poultry t war-stricken and agriculturally unde developed countries.

Relief agencies get surplus foods

Church relief agencies got a b Christmas present from the U.S. goverr ment. Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Ta Benson announced as an "appropriate action for the Christmas season that go ernment-held surplus stocks of whea flour, corn meal, rice, dried beans, dai products and cottonseed oil would be se abroad for relief agencies to use in fee ing the world's hungry. No limit was s upon the amount available. The U. government will ship the commoditi overseas, but distribution costs must l borne by relief groups. Lutheran Wor Relief will share in the program.

Because distribution costs are compar tively low, each dollar given to Luthera World Action will make possible the di tribution of more than $20 worth of foo to needy families abroad, said Dr. Fra M. Brown, LWA representative for t United Lutheran Church.

Government action followed an appe made last month to Secretary Benson l

CHRISTMAS ON BOSTON COMMON
Life-size Nativity scene and replica of colonial church stand on historic site

Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish welfare leaders. A law enacted by Congress last year permitted release of surplus farm products to voluntary relief agencies for distribution to the needy abroad, but previously only products in danger of spoilage had been made available.

Colleges benefit from Ford grant

The week before Christmas the Ford Foundation announced the biggest gifts in the history of American philanthropy. To 615 colleges and universities, 40 medical schools, and 3,500 privately supported hospitals the giant philanthropic organization donated a half-billion dollars. The Ford Foundation, established by the family of auto magnate Henry Ford, is estimated to have assets of $2.5 billion, much of it in Ford stock.

Gifts to colleges approximated one year's faculty salaries and were to be used to increase those salaries. Twelve ULCA colleges will get a total of $2,055,900. Largest sum will go to Wittenberg—$432,800. Wittenberg will also get an additional amount as one of 126 colleges which had extended themselves to help meet the economic problems of their faculties. (*For detailed list, see page 35.*)

Fifteen senior colleges of non-ULCA Lutheran bodies will get $3,359,400. Total Ford gifts to Lutheran schools in the U.S. will be at least $5,415,300. In addition, 95 church-connected Lutheran hospitals will get $4,220,070.

Church colleges need help

The Ford grants "reflect the confidence of the Foundation" in church colleges, said Dr. Gould Wickey, executive secretary of the Board of Higher Education of the ULCA. "They will stimulate our church people to larger support for both capital and current expenses."

If church colleges are to stay in business, they will need this greatly increased financial aid, a Presbyterian college president told 41 of his colleagues at a Chicago meeting early this month. Dr. Howard F. Lowry, president of the College of Wooster (Ohio), said that in a decade church colleges would need an endowment of at least $10 million to maintain adequate services. Largest Lutheran college endowment is Wittenberg's, now about $5 million.

Problems of "competing with secular colleges for first-rate teachers and providing adequate physical plants" were cited by the Presbyterian educator. "Only the church college can express its faith in every department, can see that there is no divorce of religion" from other areas

of study, the Wooster president said in urging churchmen to support their colleges more adequately.

Canadian Lutherans meet

Celebrating Christmas on these shores for the first time this year were 4,000 newcomers to the U.S. and 2,500 New Canadians brought over in 1955 by the Lutheran Refugee Service. The Canadian figure brings to 17,029 the number of Lutheran-assisted refugees who have settled in Canada in the past decade, the Rev. Clifton L. Monk, secretary of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, told that group at its annual meeting in Winnipeg early this month.

Also meeting at Winnipeg, the Canadian Lutheran Council extended its work by providing for two student secretaries to visit and advise Lutheran student groups in Canadian universities. Dr. Karl Holfeld was elected CLC president; Dr. A. G. Jacobi, vice president; and the Rev. Norman Berner, secretary.

At an informal meeting held in connection with the others, Canadian Lutheran leaders discussed the possibility of a merger of some or all of the six groups which co-operate in the Canadian Lutheran Council. Combined membership of such a united church would be 135,000. The discussion will be continued next year.

Divorce code restudied

A new statement on marriage and divorce which would take a "more realistic and modern view" may be adopted at the Harrisburg convention of the United Lutheran Church next year. This month a special commission of the Board of Social Missions, headed by Dr. William C. Zimmann, pastor of First Church, Dayton, Ohio, completed work on the statement. It will be presented to the board's April meeting for submission to the 1956 convention of the ULC in October.

The new code, first revision in the ULC stand in 25 years, proposes more adequate marriage counseling, advocates that divorced persons be permitted to remarry under certain circumstances, proclaims the right of parents to plan their families. It was fully outlined in articles in the Nov. 30 and Dec. 7 issues of THE LUTHERAN.

"The United Lutheran Church is going to take a modern view of marriage and the matter of divorce in the light of what's been going on in the last 25 years," Dr. Zimmann said. The new position "is an attempt to reflect more clearly the biblical teaching about marriage and to put remarriage of divorced persons on a less legalistic basis."

Russians tour Canada

Three high-ranking Russian Orthodox churchmen attracted a lot of attention on their recently completed three-week tour as guests of the United Church of Canada—especially when the Archbishop's flowing beard got caught in an airplane seat belt. Heading the party was the Archbishop Boris, Exarch for North America of the Moscow Patriarchate whose visa to enter the U.S. had been cancelled by the State Department early this month. With him were Archpriest Constantine Ruzetsky, rector of the Moscow Theological Seminary, and Anatol Gorbatchov, lay administrator of the seminary (*see cut*).

"Do not believe the Communist lies. There is no democracy, no freedom of speech and religion in Russia" declared pamphlets distributed outside an Ottawa church after a service in which the Russians had taken part. Anti-Communist refugees from the Baltic lands and Russian Orthodox clergy in Canada had protested the visit of the Soviet churchmen.

RUSSIAN VISITORS IN CANADA
Archpriest Ruzetsky, Archbishop Boris and Layman Gorbatchov

as "Red propaganda." Ukrainian Catholics in Toronto confronted the visitors with a demand that a Greek Rite Catholic archbishop and seven bishops now held in Soviet slave labor camps be released.

Trueblood resigns

Nearly two years ago Dr. D. Elton Trueblood, Quaker writer and philosopher, was called from his post as chairman of the department of philosophy and religion at Earlham College in Indiana to become chief of religious policy for the U.S. Information Service. In his trail-blazing job he was to advise about religious affairs for overseas broadcasts and other U.S. programs abroad.

Last week Dr. Trueblood's resignation was announced. He will return to his college job. His successor will probably be Dr. Ronald Bridges, former director of the NCCC's Broadcasting and Film Commission and more recently foreign mission executive for the Congregational Christian Church. He is a brother of New Hampshire's Senator Styles Bridges.

NLC sets up new division

In a reshuffling of its organization to provide better co-operation with the Lutheran World Federation, the National Lutheran Council will on Jan. 1 set up a new Division of LWF Affairs with Dr. Stewart W. Herman as its head. The move will mark several major changes in the NLC's structural organization to establish closer co-ordination between NLC agencies and their LWF counterparts.

Four departments will function as part of the new division, including the Department for Co-operation in Latin America which Dr. Herman will continue to direct. A Department of Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions will be headed by Dr. George F. Hall; a Department of Theological Co-operation will be headed by the Rev. Charles Carroll, former administrative assistant to NLC Director Paul C. Empie; and a Department of Lutheran World Service will be guided by Mr. Bernard A. Confer. Entire support of the new division will come

from Lutheran World Action funds.

As new administrative assistant to Dr. Empie, the Rev. Robert Busche, an American Lutheran Church pastor from Berea, Ohio, has been called.

Graham to invade New York

Throughout the world, Evangelist Billy Graham's "Crusades" have drawn record throngs, won great attention. In each case, local church groups have done a great deal of preparatory spadework over a long period to build up interest in the campaigns and to enlist support.

Because of the size of the task, Dr. Graham has not conducted a campaign in New York City. On one appearance there last March he was heard by 22,000 who jammed Madison Square Garden while 10,000 more gathered outside.

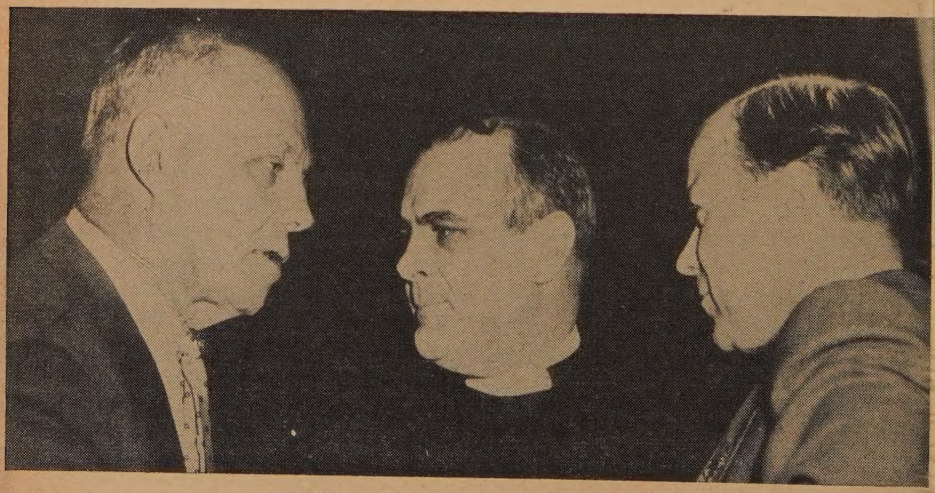
Last week, on invitation of New York's Protestant Council, Dr. Graham agreed to conduct a six-to-eight weeks' campaign there in the late spring of 1957. "New York is the number one challenge faced by me and my team because, in a sense, New York is the world's capital," Dr. Graham said. "If New York should experience a great spiritual awakening i will have an impact on Christian churche throughout the world."

Preparations will begin on May 1 1956. The year-long promotion will in clude organization of "house prayers" i large apartment buildings, gathering of 4,000-voice choir, training of severa thousand crusade counselors. Daily mas meetings will be held during the crusad in some major arena, with smaller meet ings elsewhere in the metropolitan area

Services mark labor merger

Labor and religion won't always have identical interests, NCCC Pres. Eugene C. Blake told delegates at the AFL-CIC merger convention in New York early this month, but "on important issues o moral concern we ought always to be staunch allies. In the complex pattern o American life our strength and unity will be preserved only as we all recognize our duty to God and to our neighbors."

Roman Catholic and Jewish representatives also addressed the 1,500 delegates, many of whom worshiped at special "labor" services conducted in New York



CHURCHMEN MEET LABOR LEADERS

Geo. Meany, new AFL-CIO head; Dr. Blake, Walter Reuther, union's vice president

churches during the convention which marked the uniting of the two big labor groups. Nearly 100 New York clergymen participated in a labor seminar organized in connection with the convention and at a special luncheon held informal talks with labor leaders.

Argentina promises worship freedom

The new Argentine administration of Provisional President Aramburu will "respect the religious conscience of all, guarantee freedom of worship and protect the rights of the Roman Catholic Church," said Interior Minister Eduardo Busso at a press conference early this month. His statement was the first defining the church policy of the regime. After Dictator Juan Peron's downfall in September, most of the privileges of the "official" Roman Catholic religion had been restored. Last week the government announced that all church property would be free of real estate and other taxes.

Full freedom for Protestants in Argentina was asked by the executive board of the Confederation of River Plate Evangelical Churches in an appeal to President Aramburu last week. The board urged lifting of restrictions on Protestant work in the frontier "security" zones and permission for Protestant preaching over radio stations. Restrictions on church activity in the security zones had hampered Lutheran work in the Misiones territory in Argentina's extreme northern area.

Vacation schools endangered

Daily vacation Bible schools and other summertime church activity for children in New York City would be hampered by a proposed new health code, religious education leaders claimed last week. The new regulations would place under Department of Health supervision all summer programs for children aged 6 to 13 which run for nine or more hours per week. Such programs would be subject to a 20-page list of regulations covering training of personnel, sanitation, safety.

The proposed code "threatens the free exercise of religion," said Protestant Council spokesmen. The Commissioner of Health wants to become "commissar of the churches," said the Rev. Joseph May, Baptist clergyman. Roman Catholic and Jewish leaders also were among 42 speakers who at a public hearing Dec. 6 opposed adoption of the regulations. Health Department officials said they had no intention of interfering "in any way with the teaching or practice of religion" but were concerned with safeguarding health and welfare of "more than 100,000 youngsters who attend day camps and participate in summer group programs."

Churches called ineffective

Protestant churches have failed "to reach and interest the less educated and the less privileged of our population," Dr. Willard M. Wickizer told the annual assembly of the NCCC's Division of Home Missions at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., last week. The Disciples of Christ evangelism leader warned against "keeping the churches the last bulwark of segregation" and asked for a new "zeal for Christian witness."

Churches are disappearing at an "alarming rate" from the downtown areas of cities, a report heard by the assembly said. As congregations move to the suburbs, the inner city area is often left without adequate Christian ministry.

Because city problems are aggravated by juvenile gangs, working mothers and influx of Spanish-speaking peoples, a new type of city minister is needed, the report said. He will have to be trained in "jiu-jitsu, bar evangelism, knowledge of police court procedures and a host of other matters not now provided for in seminary curricula."

World News Notes

Japanese assist Santa Claus

There weren't many American homes this week where some sort of gift made in Japan wasn't wrapped up under the Christmas tree. The Japanese were back —in their vigorous campaign for world trade—as leaders in the toy-making industry.

Export of toys has resumed its place as one of Japan's biggest businesses. Total value of toys shipped abroad in 1955 ran well above the $50 million produced in 1954. Sixty per cent of the shipments were to the U.S.

Japanese began toy-making as part of their ancient religion. Their toys were souvenir charms to be sold at shrines and temples. But cash value of the toys overseas led the Japanese to branch out. Besides dolls—the Japanese specialty—they make metal cars, trains, porcelain tea sets, celluloid animals, and practically anything else American parents can be induced to pay for.

Germans march again

Western nations, positive 10 years ago that they never wanted another German soldier to shoulder arms, were pleased this month that the West German government had begun the formation of a new army. A hundred soldiers stood at attention in the courtyard of the Ermekeil barracks in Bonn last month for a sober ceremony marking the beginning of the rearmament.

The troops lined up for the first time on Germany's memorial day, when the dead of two world wars were remembered. According to the German newspaper, *Sonntagsblatt*, it is not "a showy army."

"It couldn't be any different, after these past four decades, because even our state is unostentatious. Our national memorial day was unaffected by ostentatious emotions—no resounding speeches at the tombs of war heroes, no parades before war memorials. The past four decades were too serious for showmanship . . ."

A new approach is needed to establish a military tradition for newly born democratic Germany, the paper said. "If we want to relate this new army to our historic past and re-establish a continuity between past and present, we'll have to skip over a long period of time and history which we don't intend to belittle but which does not fit into our present situation . . ."

Israel attacks

To teach Syrians not to interfere with fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee, Israeli soldiers struck against a Syrian army post on Dec. 11, killing 41. It was the ugliest Israeli aggression since the attack on Kibya in Jordan, where 42 Arab civilians were killed in 1953.

Syrians, whose army is no match for Israel's, sputtered in helpless rage, and began talking with Egypt about joint resistance in case Israel attacks again. Israeli leaders fear that shipment of Communist armaments to Egypt may turn the Middle East balance of power against them.

Israel suffers from incessant Arab border raids, aimed at theft or sabotage. A reprisal raid, such as the Sea of Galilee attack this month, is intended to warn Israel's neighbors to keep out of their territory.

The UN Security Council discussed the problem on Dec. 16, but as usual there was nothing the UN could do except pronounce its condemnation of the Israeli attack.

WASHINGTON

By ROBERT VAN DEUSEN

CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION

THE WHITE HOUSE Conference on Education brought into focus the growing public awareness of the crisis facing our schools. Almost two thousand leaders in public life from all parts of the country came to Washington to discuss the serious shortage of classrooms and teachers and related problems. They realized that these conditions will become more acute as the high birth rate sends a growing army of children and young people up through the public schools.

The organization of this conference followed a new pattern. Instead of giving delegates a chance to air their grievances from the floor, the entire discussion took place in groups of ten to twelve people. Each "round table" elected a leader who carried the views expressed by that group to a conference of leaders. These leaders then chose the final drafting committee.

In this way, ideas held by only a few people had little chance of surviving the successive stages of screening. This may have been a disadvantage, since some of the best ideas are championed to start with by a few pioneers. But the purpose of the conference was to arrive at a common opinion on major issues.

Federal aid

ONE OF THE MOST controversial questions was whether the federal government should play a major role in raising the educational standards and in meeting the crucial problems. It was charged before the meeting began that its membership was "stacked" with opponents to federal aid so that the outcome was predetermined.

The result was unexpected. The delegates approved by a ratio of more than two to one the idea that the federal government should give money to the states for education. A large majority approved the use of federal funds for school building construction. On the question of using federal funds for local school operation, there was an almost even division of sentiment.

This approval of federal aid was hedged about with safeguards. The delegates were opposed to any federal control over use of funds in local school districts. The funds should be administered, they felt, through the state educational agency. Federal aid should never be allowed to become a deterrent to state or local initiative.

THERE WAS OPPOSITION to mixing the question of school aid with the issue of racial segregation in the schools. Only one table in ten believed that federal aid should be limited to those districts certifying that they were conforming to the Supreme Court decision. It was felt that compliance with that decision should be a matter for the courts to enforce.

The status and needs of parochial schools came in for lively discussion. There was agreement on the right of private schools to exist and the right of parents to send their children to parochial schools. But a large majority opposed the use of tax funds for support of private schools. There was some sentiment in favor of including children of nonpublic schools in health and welfare benefits.

Because of the strong sentiment in the conference in favor of federal aid to education, that will probably become a leading issue in the next session of Congress.

"Away in a manger, no crib for his bed . . ."

GOD GAVE US CHRISTMAS

OF ALL the Christian holy days, Christmas is the easiest to understand and the best beloved. The story of a precious Child in his mother's arms, of heavenly carols over moonlit fields, of wise men bringing gifts, is compounded of such sweet mystery that it speaks to folks who never let a preacher preach to them.

DEPARTMENT stores and TV stations join up in filling the air with the old Christmas songs, because these songs are the deathless music of hope for which all men are hungry. Predictions of peace on earth, however out of tune they seem with headlines in today's newspaper, strengthen our faith that God's kingdom will come. There are those to whom the kingdom has already come, and we pray that it may come also unto us.

THERE will be many King Herods commanding their troops to destroy Christmas, but they will not succeed. God's child has been born, and no man can destroy him. Christmas is the prophecy that the eternal God will conquer sin and death through his gift of himself in Christ.

CHRISTMAS CAME TO AIR FORCE BASE IN CALIFORNIA

Airmen Told the Christmas Story

Military personnel took time off from war preparation for Nativity pageant

By JOY S. SCHAEFFER

LET'S SEE—one camel, one donkey, 50 sheep, two arc lights, a 25-kilowatt transformer, an inn 60 feet long, a runway control tower! Does this sound like the property list for a church Christmas pageant? Yes, it's a Christmas pageant, sponsored by Beale Air Force Base, in California. This year it was presented on the evenings of Dec. 7, 8, 9.

Now in its third year, the pageant has grown from an intended Base Sunday school pageant to a spectacle which in 1954 was witnessed by 14,000.

It all started in 1953 when the chaplains decided to have a traditional Sunday school pageant of the Christmas story. When the Base Commander, Colonel Saunders, heard of the plan, he suggested they make it a big thing and encourage people from the base and surrounding area to see and participate in it.

IT WASN'T LONG before the whole base caught the enthusiasm and many people volunteered for the different jobs. The Aviation Engineers erected a 35-foot-wide stable, an inn, and a house to set the scene. Palm trees were transplanted to the site to add atmosphere.

A mound, 10 feet high, was put up so the angels would appear to be standing in mid-air. The rolling Sierras surrounding Beale give a feeling of Judean hills and only the telephone poles and wires make us realize we are in California.

MANY GROUPS on the base help prepare for the pageant. Costumes are made by women of the Officer's Wives' Club. Men of the fire department plan the fire by which the shepherds warm themselves. Air Base Defense crews install flares for the burst of light for the angels.

"THERE WERE SHEPHERDS OUT IN THE FIELDS KEEPING WATCH OVER THEIR FLOCK"

WISE MEN IN GORGEOUS ROBES

THIS WAS THE MANGER SCENE

A former reporter of The Des Moines *Register* handles publicity. A one-time Hollywood stage director is stage manager. Children and women of the base act as angels. Airmen and officers are narrators and cast members. The communications officer installs a system of six field phones by which the chaplain-director is able to co-ordinate the action.

The outdoor stage is twice the length of a football field and with such a communication system the audience is unaware of the "behind the scene" work. Choirs from churches of the surrounding area have co-operated in a mass choir. This year the well-known Parks Air Force Base Airmen's Chorus under the leadership of Lutheran Chaplain (Captain) Hans Sandrock (ALC) added their voices to the singing of carols.

Helping to lend authenticity and also one of the main attractions of the pageant is Celia the camel, borrowed from the San Francisco zoo. This year she was joined by two more camels and their presence was exciting not only to the audience but even more so to the cast who try to make her visit the manger with proper dignity and without balking.

Before Celia can arrive, many arrangements must be made. A local insurance agent thought the chaplain was joking when he asked, "Can you insure a camel?" When the agent was persuaded that the chaplain was serious, there was much writing and telephoning before a company could be found to issue a policy. Finally a company in London issued a public liability and life insurance policy.

After several months of preparation, the nights for the pageant arrive. Air Police guide the townspeople to their bleacher seats. Many people have to sit on hay strewn on the ground to cover the deep mud caused by December rains.

The choir and cast take their places. Chaplain Schaeffer, the pageant director, climbs to his position in a control tower to co-ordinate the action. The strains of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" come from the choir. A huge beam of light strikes the First Prophet of Israel as he shouts, "The people that walk in darkness shall see a great light . . ."

Then an expectant hush comes on the people as in the distance they see the figures of Mary, Joseph, and the donkey making their way to the Inn. As they go

CAMEL CAME FROM SAN FRANCISCO

WIVES MADE THE ANGEL COSTUMES

into the darkness of the stable, we see a fire and the shepherds around it watching a nearby flock of sheep. Then suddenly a flare of light and the startled shepherds look up to see an angel in the sky and then more angels, saying "Fear not, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy."

Now we look again to the stable over which—as if by miracle—a bright star is shining. We see the tranquil beauty of the Mother and her Babe and to even the hardened heart there must be a sigh of joy at this great sight. The angels, shepherds and wise men come to the manger as the choir softly sings, "Silent Night." And so for thousands of people on a California Air Base the miracle of Christmas has once more been relived.

THE IDEA OF GOD'S ACTIVITY in the world and his judgment upon all human attainments has surprising political consequences. It warns us that no system is absolute or eternal, and that all the structures of our collective life now stand under judgment and must be reformed. It reminds us that God may not be quite as concerned as we are about the idols we have set up. He may not be so anxious to preserve western supremacy or the superior position of the white race. He may not see the fall of western civilization as the ultimate evil, not desire to fight communism in just the same way as we do. He might even will radical changes in certain institutions we now cherish, as the only way by which his Plan for the world can go forward.

—M. RICHARD SHAULL in *Encounter With Revolution* (Association Press)

Christmas story sounds strange in Japanese

WHY SHOULD COMMUNISTS GIVE ALL THE PRESENTS?

By LLOYD NEVE

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN over 300 children there, sitting elbow to elbow on the hard floor, wedged into every nook and corner right up to the chancel. Behind them stood another 200 adults, all of them packed into the little 20 x 40 foot Lutheran church in Hita. This was the big moment of the year. It was Christmas in Japan.

This Christmas Eve in the Hita church was almost all the Christmas that these children would be able to enjoy. Japan has few Christian families. Christmas at home—gathering around the tree, singing hymns, reading the Gospel account, giving presents—is unknown here.

Not that the Japanese haven't heard about Christmas! They've seen the lean, rubber-booted Santa Claus in the city streets at Christmas time advertising the wares of the Asahiya department store or a movie at the Taisyokan theater. And they've seen the tinsel and trees in the big stores. They've even heard "Silent Night" and "Jingle Bells" from loudspeaking systems strung along thoroughfares in all the big cities. But still, Christmas to them is little more than a custom imported from America by the GIs, based on a myth somehow connected with Santa Claus, Himalayan pine trees, and somebody's birthday.

THAT'S WHY TONIGHT is to the glory of God in the Highest. For tonight these shepherds in Japanese clothing will be telling again the wonderful news about a Saviour who has been born in Bethlehem. Yes, but no less wonderful than if he had been born last night here in Hita.

But here we are again in the midst of this sea of children, most of whom came an hour early to reserve their square foot of floor. While we wait for the program to begin, take a look at the Christmas tree, *kurisumasu tsuree* as you would hear it called tonight.

JAPANESE HAVE DELICATE TOUCH IN PORTRAYING MADONNA AND CHILD

One would think that with all of their delicate flower arrangements, their love of natural beauty, the Japanese more than any other people would know how to decorate a Christmas tree that it might become a thing of beauty.

But a Christmas tree in Japan is not decorated. Rather it is systematically and garishly loaded with yards and yards of red and green rope, an amount of cotton equivalent to nothing less than a blizzard, paper cranes, tinsel, stars, every conceivable and inconceivable garnishment, until the tree is all but invisible and the crown is bent down toward the ground. But you must see it to believe it!

THEY'VE STARTED the program and, of course, the primary children are first—but not with recitations. Maybe they believe here that children should be seen and not heard. The children portray to us, in the unintelligible pantomime dances that are the favorite dramatic medium even on the Japanese stage, the stars that go *kira kira,* the camels' hooves that go *kapo kapo,* the unrepressed joy of a child on Christmas Eve. They are accompanied by an offstage chorus like the old Greek plays of Aristophanes. And they say the children are "cute" here too.

After a talk by one of the adults on the origin of the Christmas tree and of Santa Claus we come to the main feature of the evening: the portrayal in five acts of the events of that momentous night when peasants heard the first Hallelujah Chorus, when a night clerk told the Mother of our Saviour that they were "all filled up for the night," when wisemen from the Orient, maybe even from Japan and China, came to see their true Lord and Saviour years before Buddha had come to either of their lands.

It wasn't an ordinary drama. Not that the story was any different from the one we hear every year at Christmas. But the story came fresh for me when I saw those Japanese shepherds around the fire discussing the census which was bringing so many people to their city. They spoke of the high taxes imposed by the Roman government, the misery brought on by those taxes; and finally, as if to put voice to the unspeakable suffering of the oppressed, one shepherd longingly said, "if only the Messiah would hurry and come."

AGAIN, AS I SAT and listened, I thought to myself that the thing that gave the story new flavor for me was the Japanese language itself. In Japanese, when the shepherds talk among themselves, they talk like farmers do here—the rude, rough, short language that you would expect to hear out in the rice paddies. On the other hand, when this same shep-

herd addresses the Christ-child King, his language puts him in the humble, servile position and attitude that an inferior must assume in the presence of his superior.

When King Herod talks to his advisers, he sounds like the proud, haughty, arrogant Lord-of-the-universe that we know him to have been. And when the courtiers respond, again their very words reflect the position of utter abjection and servility that only Herod's servants must have known.

When the innkeeper uses language that in English might roughly carry the meaning of "trow da bum out," you wonder if probably that really wasn't the way that they talked to Mary and Joseph that night. You understand how truly Jesus was humbled when he was born among men.

The wisemen talk like the scholars that they probably were. So they become not just three men on camels but three men who have spent long years searching through books for this treasure that they have finally come upon tonight.

COMPARE A LANGUAGE like this, where you can tell the station of a man by the style of words he uses, and English, where the innkeeper, the king, the shepherds and the scholars must all use the same precise, classroom English and you will understand how enjoyable it was to hear the Christmas story in this entirely new medium. I think this is more like it would have sounded to us two thousand years ago if we had been there to watch and listen.

And then the climax of the evening—Santa Claus. I too had groaned in my spirit when I heard that they had Santa Claus in their church Christmas program. But after seeing Santa that night I am convinced that it is we in America who make the mistake, allowing the world to paganize a custom that came originally from one of God's own saints.

Why shouldn't it be Saint Nicholas sent by God to show God's love toward man by bringing gifts from Him? That is the kind of a Santa Claus I saw at Hitt

WHEN SANTA CLAUS told those children that he wanted them to come to this Sun day school and learn about Jesus who died for their sins, to learn about God's greatest gift for them, I thought to myself that this was as good as a month of Sunday school classes. The children lis tened, for Santa Claus was telling them

Why should we be content to let the Communists pass out food and gifts in the name of Khrushchev? Why shouldn't we pass out presents in the name of our God of love?

We closed with "Joy to the World." I thought of "Everywhere, Everywhere Christmas Tonight. Christmas in the land of the bamboo and rice-paddy." Sounds sort of strange but then why shouldn't the Christ-child be born also in Japan

WHY CHRISTMAS COMES IN WINTER

WINTERTIME must have seemed far more dreary in the days of long ago than it can possibly seem now. People had difficulty in keeping warm when there was no heat in their homes but blazing log fires. Food supplies became scanty when the earth was bare and cold. Winter nights were long and dark, with only crude lamps to light them.

People of the long ago watched the sun sink lower in the sky each autumn day, and yearned for returning spring. At last came the day when the sun was checked in its downward course. On a morning in late December it rose a moment earlier than it had the morning before. The year was turning the corner! Days would gradually lengthen, and a new year begin.

THAT WAS THE TIME for celebration. Everyone was joyful, and took part with eagerness in observing the midwinter festival. Winter was not over by any means. It was really only well begun. But people knew that the returning sun was a sign that time was on their side. Spring would come.

With what a stroke of genius the early Christians chose the time of the midwinter festival as the time for celebrating the birth of Christ! When Christians first began to celebrate Christmas, they no longer knew the day of the year on which Jesus was born. They selected Dec. 25 because on that day, according to the old Julian calendar, the sun turned in its course. That day was celebrated in the Roman Empire as "the Birthday of the Sun." What a splendid time to celebrate the birthday of God's Son!

FOR ON the day Jesus was born, history turned the corner. The winter of human suffering and selfishness was by no means over. It was still a cold, cruel world. There were still to be years of famine and years of war. But on the rim of the east men had seen the dawn. God's light is streaming across history. God is here. In the birth of a little Child there is the promise of the coming of God's kingdom.

Let's celebrate Christmas! It comes at the gloomiest, dreariest time of the year. But Christmas is the evidence that a new day has dawned, that time is on God's side, that eventually we shall live in the full springtime of peace and joy.

CHRISTMAS WAS COMING
IN THE ITALIAN ALPS . . .

THESE HANDS PRAISE GOD

Woodcarvers in Tyrol spent autumn evenings shaping figures o the Holy Family. There is reverence and skill in their craftsmanshi

By GUSTAV K. WIENCKE

WE HELD IN OUR HANDS a faded snapshot taken twenty years ago. It showed a Tyrolean widow with her sons. That and a name were the only clues we had. But we were told, "You must visit the woodcarvers, and if you can, stay at the farmstead."

Since that snapshot was taken, the hot breath of the war had reached into the valley. All four sons would have been of military age, we reckoned. Would any still be alive? And the old grandmother, would she still be living in the small-windowed, whitewashed house?

WE DROVE UP the tiny valley, dropped deep into the Dolomites in northern Italy. There we stopped to inquire, and the German-speaking Tyroleans said, "Yes, they still live here. You must go to the 'Plotsch.'" They pointed to the north slope of the mountain where green meadows thrust their smooth fingers into the pines.

Above loomed the yellow cliffs which, almost every day, lose their pinnacles in the clouds. When southern Tyrol was lopped off and given to Italy, the Italians named the valley "Selva," which means wilderness, but the mountain farmers still cling to the old, beautiful name.

We climbed the steep lane on foot, for it was too narrow for an automobile. With the help of the photo we found the right farmhouse, a heavy stone building with a weathered, grey roof. Only the grandmother was at home, baby-sitting for the tiny granddaughter.

Everyone else was up in the meadows shearing the slopes with scythes and storing the short, green hay in the mountain barns. But when the men came down

CLIFFS LOSE THEIR PINNACLES IN CLOUDS

they already knew that some American strangers had been asking for them in the village.

Leaning comfortably over the fence and looking down at the village, we heard the story of the past twenty years. Yes, every one of the four sons had been pulled off the meadows into the army while the grandmother struggled on alone. The centrifugal force of the war had strewn them far—one to Abyssinia, another as a prisoner of war to Nebraska. One had been disarmed by the partisans. But, not long after, all four were back in their beloved mountains.

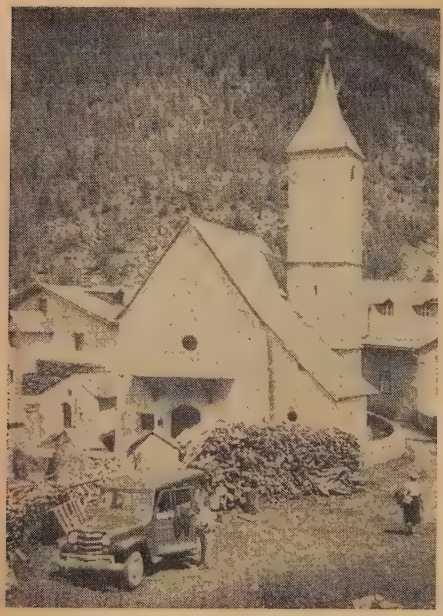
We watched the lengthening shadows of the *Langkovel* move over the village church. "See that house below," said our host, pointing to a modern Swiss-style villa. "That's where Himmler lived, and over there Goebbels stayed. Top-command of the German S.S." Only, no one in the village knew until afterward. Allied airman tried to bomb the town, but could not get a run on their target. We shuddered at the dark tales of the last frantic months of the war and of the many men who never came back.

THE MOUNTAIN FARMER, however, cannot live from picture-card scenery. Back from the war, our host took over the farmstead and married the girl next door. He turns his cattle out to munch the green fodder between the rough rocks and pines. The smooth slopes are clipped with scythes and the hay turned by hand to dry. Then it is raked into big canvas bags and pulled into log huts to cure.

In the winter the hay is brought down to the home-barn in 600-pound loads on sleds. It was an event for our host when we took him in our car to his other mountain meadow, a steep two-and-a-half hours away by foot. He arrived fresh for scything, and we took him back at noon so that he could bring in the hay on the near meadow. "The first time I've been to both meadows on the same day," he said.

EVEN WHEN everyone in the family helps, from the grandmother who takes care of the barn to little seven-year-old Sita, there isn't enough to feed a family of seven. This is why the mountain farmer puts away his scythe and takes out his carving chisels.

That evening we sat in the living-room on the long bench that runs around the wall. "Let me show you what we make," said our host. The children, excited with the company of a foreign family, giggled and played around the heavy stove which



LITTLE CHURCH IS THE VILLAGE CENTER

is shaped like a plastered locomotive. A bed was built over the top, and a bench and drawers around below to make it a cozy spot in the winter.

In the opposite corner our host and his wife took their places at the living-room table. He pulled the lamp down to throw a pool of light over his brown fingers. Clamped to the table in front of him was the worn carving block, and a heavy leather pad hung over his chest. Across the table sat his wife, but first she had put on the traditional dirndl—the flowered scarf—and the handsome comb in her smooth black hair.

HUSBAND AND WIFE are a woodcarving team. She takes the tinder-dry, smooth pine blocks and carves the rough shape of a figure in the "Holy Family." Then she hands the almost-living shape to her husband, Alois. With the finest chisels he traces the delicate lines of reverence and awe—Mary with her hands clasped, Joseph, bearded and silent, the laughing radiant Babe. There are shepherds too: men of the hills like himself, and sheep and kings from faraway lands.

We poked our fingers in a cardboard box of "models." "We use them for size," said Alois. We pulled some out and looked at them and then at his new carving, and saw what he was putting into the wood. It was more than a made-to-order manufacture, having something of the tranquility, the joy of his own family.

"These are better than the models," said our host, and we knew why. One by one as the little ones were readied for bed, they came to say good night. After the good night kiss, each child made the sign of the cross over the parent's face and giggled off to the featherbeds.

"My fingers are stiff," said Alois, flexing his stubby hands. Haying and carving don't go together, but it is in the long winter, when the snow-whitened mountains keep watch outside, that he does his carving. For wood he chooses "Zirbel" pine, a tree with twisted tufts of medium-length needles.

CARVING AND WOODWORKING have been a long tradition in the family down through the generations. And before that? The ancient name, *"Plotsch"* took on meaning, for this was a way-station for caravans that chose the high passes north from Venice across the Alps. "Camels used to stop here and drink at the trough," we were told. Then they would make their way into the morning mist—something like the Magi who came to worship and then disappeared from the Bible story.

Another evening was interrupted by news from a neighbor up the mountain. Appendicitis, and help was needed! Alois lost no time but thrust his soft green hat on his head and bade us goodbye. "It is

TIME FOR BED IN ALPINE HOME . . . YOUNGSTERS ARE REVERENT

a godchild of mine," he exclaimed.

Though the neighbor was a grown man, he still felt a responsibility for the person for whom he had stood sponsor at baptism. The sick man had to be carried down to the ambulance in the village, and it was feared that the appendix had burst. "He was up scything in the meadow all day," they said. Two days later we heard that the young man was out of danger, and everyone breathed easier.

Up under the gable the mountain farmers paint the Christian cross and the letters, INRI. They also like the monogram which spells "Maria." More than good luck signs, these are mute testimony of an unspoken conviction that a divine hand governs their lives amid the uncertainties of this world.

The little white Christmas figures were packed away in tissue paper and the shavings swept up. "We must get the hay in first," said Alois. But when the chill of winter comes, the grandmother will fire up the stone stove from the kitchen, and the skilled hands of the woodcarvers in the valley will give a new life to the lumber they have fetched from the slopes.

Sunday afternoon the farmer spread a blanket on the hillside and sat there with his wife in the sun. The children were playing in the yard—all except little Sita. Grave and intent, she had taken a chip from the woodshed and was carving it with a broken chisel. Our little boy, too, was trying to carve with his scout knife, but we knew which hands were more skillful.

O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee

CHRISTMAS IS EVERYWHERE

A story about a mother and child who were far from home when the church bells rang

By MARGARETHE ERDAHL SHANK

THE DRAPERIES were drawn, the Christmas tree in the small living-room lighted, gifts from back home in Minnesota stacked under the tree. Stella felt that she and Bunty were still looking at an illusion of Christmas. Could externals like packages, candles, holly wreaths recreate the Christmases of their past?

Living in Arizona had given Stella's small son a return of health even after only two months' stay. But for Stella it meant loneliness and disquiet. Now on Christmas Eve, with the candles lighted between them, five-year old Bunty's record player voicing the Christmas songs softly, Stella found her heart rebellious

and discontented. They missed the folks at home. While her small son could prattle off his loneliness for father and grandparents, Stella found no comfort.

EARLIER IN THE AFTERNOON there had been a small domestic crisis, with Bunty's playmates, led by their ringleader Ikey, tormenting her small son with the thought that since he was away from home, Santa would never find him. Encouraged by Bunty's tears, they had teased and teased until finally Stella could stand it no longer.

"Don't you think you are being unkind, Ikey, teasing Bunty like that? He's only five and you're eight. Do you think it's fair to tell a little boy that Santa won't find him?"

Ikey picked up a rock and bounced it from palm to palm, scorn and amusement written strongly on every pugnacious feature. "Well, will he find him?" he asked.

Like seaweed dislodged after a storm, anger rose in Stella. "Of course he'll find him. And if I wanted Santa to come to my house, Ikey Tallman, I'd go home and wash my face and hands and go to church on Sunday and learn how to be kind to people who have shown only kindness to you!"

All the children shuffled out of the yard as Stella led Bunty into the house. Hardly had the screen closed behind them when she heard the sharp crash of Ikey's rock upon the door. Honest with herself, she realized her irritation was out of proportion to its cause. But she was constantly reminded that out here people were different, friendly in a casual way, but accustomed to strangers even as they grew complacent about their nearly changeless weather.

STELLA WAS ROUSED from her thoughts by Bunty's insistent, "When do we go, Mommy? When do we take cookies to Ikey and Grandpa's friend in the drug store?"

"Right away," she said, "and then we'll come back and open our presents from home." Mechanically she rose to stack the dishes in the sink (how pitifully few they were, contrasted with the stacks and stacks at home during the holidays!) and fetch their wraps and the brightly ribboned cookie boxes.

Like all quarreling children, Bunty had quickly forgotten his grievances. Nothing would do but they deliver Christmas packages as they did back home in Minnesota, and who better to give to than Ikey, whose mother, according to Bunty, "baked only store cookies"? Adult logic, with its own table of weights and measurements, would never have chosen Ikey as a worthy recipient of their elaborately decorated Christmas cookies.

She thought of Grandpa Morrison's old college roommate, now owner of the Granite Valley drug store, as perhaps welcoming a box of homemade delicacies. Bunty was skeptical at first, feeling that anyone who owned a fountain full of ice cream and a showcase of candy bars would regard their cookies as poor substitutes.

THEY TURNED OFF the Christmas-tree lights, locked the front door, and set out into the cold-clear night. The path toward town led past the corner where Ikey lived. "Why haven't we walked in starshine before?" inquired Bunty.

Oddly, Stella had been wondering herself. No sunbathed world of sand and rock mountains met them now, only a vast blue-black dome of sky, shining with not one great golden Christmas star but galaxies of large glittering stars, many-hued, irridescent.

She felt the tug of Bunty's hand as he

pulled her toward the weed-grown Tallman yard. Stella felt a strong reluctance toward knocking upon a strange door and offering a Christmas box. They walked across the sagging concrete porch.

Quickly Bunty's stubby little finger found a doorbell. A radio within blared a reindeer song. A sparsely decorated tree with its silver tip awry shone through an uncurtained window. They pressed the bell again. Sharp heels clicked across a bare floor, and the door was flung open by a wrapper-clad woman with her hair in pin curls. "Well?" she asked.

"Is Ikey home? We have cookies for him."

"He ain't here. He went down to the grocery to fetch his supper. Ain't you Bunty's ma?" The young woman on the other side of the screen compressed her lips, shook her head emphatically. "I ain't sure Ikey'd like your cookies. I don't take to being told that my son needs a bath and ought to go to church. I ain't never tended to your business."

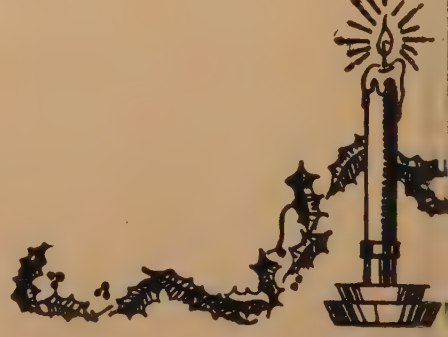
STELLA FELT the frightened tugs at her sleeve as Bunty willed to be gone. She strove to keep her wits uppermost, her emotions under control. "I may have spoken in anger. But the children were bullying my son, with Ikey insisting Santa would never find Bunty in a strange town. Please accept these Christmas cookies, Mrs. Tallman. We'll all feel better i you do."

Long vermilion nails unlatched th screen, reached for the box. "Well, a right. I ain't never allowed Ikey to be bully. I want you to know that." Stell smiled, wished them all a Merry Christ mas, and started down the porch. "Sorr I can't ask you in, but Ikey's Pa and are going night-clubbin', it being Christ mas and all, but Ikey and his grandm will enjoy the cookies."

They said their goodnights. As the moved up the dark street toward th lights of the village, Stella reflected tha even in such a home the symbols o Christmas had found their way in a cooki box: chocolate-covered wisemen, silver spattered stars, angels with frostec wings.

AS BUNTY prattled on about toys i shop windows, Indians alighting from a creaking cart, Stella wondered abou Grandpa Morrison's old friend who wa now the local druggist. Though he neve knew it, he had been their reason fo choosing Granite Valley. "Old Sandy'l make you welcome, mix Bunty's prescrip tions," Grandpa had said, along with many reminiscences about their college days. "Think you better go there. It's nice to know one person in a small town.'

Sandy Johnson had been friendly



enough when they came in, but he had a vague, preoccupied air that discouraged intimacy. Stella could never bring herself to believe that the Sandy Johnson who lived in Grandpa's college tales was the Sandy Johnson who owned the Granite Valley drug store. But Grandpa need never know how age had dulled his favorite character!

Despite the surge of shoppers she found the druggist soon enough, ringing up change for a pair of disheveled, tired-looking cowboys. "Well, how are you, son? Waiting for Santa?" the old man asked, patting Bunty's head and smiling at Stella.

"Bunty brought you homemade cookies," she said.

"Now, isn't that nice? I haven't had a homemade cookie since Ada passed away last fall." There was a strained pause, while he took off his glasses and wiped them with a wrinkled handkerchief.

"We wanted to wish you a blessed holiday season," said Stella. "We really must go. You're busy and Bunty's growing tired."

HE EASED THE GLASSES over his ears. "Just a minute," he said. "You don't suppose you and that boy of yours would like to step out with an old man tomorrow? Ada always saw to it that I closed the store on Christmas and took her down to Phoenix for church and a fancy dinner." He paused, searching for adequate words. "You might say, I'd like to keep that tradition alive."

"We'd love to," said Stella, giving him her hand.

"Be ready at nine," he said. "Son," he said to the sleepy Bunty, "I'll tell you tales about your Grandpa you'll never forget!"

Back in the chilly, dry night air even Bunty came to life again, skipping beside her with eager steps. The prospect of lighting their Christmas tree, opening their packages, having a hot chocolate bedtime party did not seem so frighteningly lonely now. A star Roman-candled a path across the black night sky.

"Can we walk in the star-shine every night?" asked Bunty.

"Yes," she promised, "again and again."

"Will Christmas remember to come to Ikey's house?" he asked, as they passed the window with its makeshift tree and its bare pane.

"I'm sure it will," his mother replied. The scent of desert wood smoke rose upon the air. Down in the Mexican village a bell in the adobe church tower rang sweet and resounding upon the still air. "Bunty," said Stella with real conviction, "Christmas doesn't forget to come anywhere upon this Christian earth. But sometimes we forget that first we must let it in."

"MERRY CHRISTMAS" IS NOT ENOUGH

By RALPH W. SOCKMAN

OLD YET EVER FRESH, year after year, is the familiar greeting, "Merry Christmas." Life needs its times of merriment just as streams of water need their rapids to keep them pure.

It is good at Christmas to let mirth and jollity come bubbling to the surface of our lives. But the first Christmas greeting was a call to joy, not to mere merriment. "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Joy is more than mirth. It is a vivid and animating pleasure, inspired by the perception of something productive of good. It quickens the spirit, enlivens the countenance, gives radiance to the eye.

Christmas continues and grows because it reopens the springs of genuine joy. It clears away the false and formal things which fill and clog our natures and lets the simple, elemental, natural things come through. The innocence of childhood, the unfathomable love of motherhood, the kindly ministries of shepherds, the humble adoration of the wise men—in these we feel again the things by which and for which we are made. Although the earth may seem old with its burden of care, at Christmas it is always young.

While many will make merry without a Saviour, let us try to catch the Christmas joy about a Saviour.

FIRST OF ALL, it is the joy of a saving light. Admiral Peary, after his long experience in the Arctic, declared that the worst menace which men had to fight was not the cold but the darkness. The long nights near the North Pole took a heavy toll of morale and health. Sunlight is essential to the health of the leaf on the tree, the skin on the body and the spirit in the man.

It is not hard to imagine what terrors the nights must have held for primitive men before they learned the laws of nature and the explanation of darkness. In their ignorance they peopled the shadows with frightening possibilities.

Hence it is little wonder that the Old Testament spoke of the coming Redeemer in terms of light breaking into darkness. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." The citizens of Palestine lived in a dark world. They had been overrun by conquering nations. They were satellites of the Caesars in Rome. Their sick souls tossed restlessly like patients in pain waiting for the dawn and a deliverer.

In this darkness Christ was born at Bethlehem. The birth of Christ brought a saving light to illumine the life which is in each of us, to show us that we are not mere morsels of flesh raised from the dust and doomed to rot again into it. We are children of a heavenly Father. Christ brings the light and warmth and meaning which turn life's winter into spring.

A SECOND REASON for joy is that Christ comes as saving love. Cynics have often charged that Christmas is only a perpetuation of pre-Christian pagan festivals. But in all these there was very little element of love. In Christ there came One

so magnetic that he has drawn many pagan features into the celebration of his birth, such as the yule log, the Christmas tree, the jolly figure of Saint Nicholas. Why? Because Christ answers the hunger of the human heart for love.

The manger at Bethlehem is the beautiful beginning of the world's greatest love story. The child cradled there grew up in the love of a Nazarene home. Out of love for his people he left his carpenter shop for the career of teacher and healer. In love he lifted the broken bodies and hearts of the poor, the sick, the sinful. He loved them even to the end, for even on the cross he prayed for his persecutors. Jesus gave his life not only for his friends, but also for his enemies, for all the world.

Since Christ's love was revealed, the world has never been as it was before. Out of his love have grown a new reverence for womanhood, new care for childhood, new concern for the home, heightened spirit of humaneness toward the suffering, quickened conscience regarding injustice.

I AM WELL AWARE of the darkness of our war-shadowed world. In these times we talk much about being realistic. We usually mean that we must take the darkest possible view of our dangers and our surroundings. I, too, want to be realistic. I do not want to be fooled by wishful thinking. But we can be deceived by foolish fears as well as by futile hopes.

Christmas, with its sequel through the centuries, convinces me that love is more lastingly real than our present hatreds, just as the sunshine is more lastingly real than the clouds. Therefore, I rejoice with those who first heard the "good tidings of great joy" for the Saviour born in the city of David brought a saving love.

The Saviour's light and love have proved also to be a saving power. The Christmas story contains an interesting study in contrasted powers. Joseph and Mary went up to Bethlehem because of a decree sent out by Caesar Augustus that all the empire should be taxed. Caesar Augustus—what a name to ponder! The mightiest monarch the world had seen up to that time. On his words the whole world waited.

What did Caesar Augustus know or care about the poor carpenter's wife and her Babe in the little town of Bethlehem? And in the Christmas scene is another powerful figure, Herod, called the Great. He had heard rumors that a rival might arise from among the Jewish people. He would risk no such danger. He bade the wise men bring him word if they found such a possibility. How helpless looked that Babe in the manger under the shadow of Herod's murderous intent!

A few years later in the reign of Caesar's successor, Jesus died on a cross. But the lowly manger of his birth and the shameful cross of his death did not stop the Christ from outliving Herod and Caesar. Today these men would scarcely be remembered except for their connection with the Christmas story. Just as the root of a growing tree can crack the solid pavement, so the divine life which was in the Bethlehem Babe has cracked the crowns of kings and despots down the centuries.

Yet the supreme power of the One born in Bethlehem is that he saves people from their sins. That is why they called his name Jesus. That is the power above all others which our world desperately needs. That is the reason above all others why Christmas to the Christian is more than merry. It brings the "good tidings of great joy that unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

FIVE MAKE A FAMILY

HOME FOR LUNCH

BLANCHE LIGHTMAN called about ten this morning. "Can you pick up a few of the children for the choir party this afternoon? With weather like this, quite a few mothers have called Mrs. Shumaker to tell her they are keeping the youngsters at home. Maybe it really is too far for some of them to walk in the wind and cold. She called me to see whether I could help, but I'm up to my ears in this youth banquet."

"Let's see. The party's at two-thirty?"

"That's right. The weather might moderate by that time, but lots of people are getting upset."

"Lots of people?"

"Well, Mrs. Shumaker, really. Two mothers called her so she's afraid everyone else feels the same. And she really does count on this party as a morale booster for the choir. She has Santa bring those cute little choir pins for the boys and girls. Her son, the one who is home from college, acts as Santa and tells how proud he is of them."

"I shouldn't think the parents would want the youngsters to miss it, would you? Pete's been talking about it since before Christmas. I certainly wouldn't keep him home unless he was really sick."

"When she told me who the parents were, I wasn't too surprised. You know the kind who are always trying to protect their children from doing anything constructive! I feel sorry for the children. I honestly do. But about the transportation. Will you call the parents?"

"Maybe I'd better. And I'll call Mrs. Shumaker, too. You get along back to your youth banquet."

"All right, Connie. Thanks a million. I did feel I wanted to help Mrs. Shumaker, but in some ways supervising these young people is just as much work, or really more, than doing things myself."

"I know. But it's the only way they feel the banquet is theirs. Karen is all wrapped up in the skit her class is doing. She tells me Barbara says it has to be good, because she doesn't want the ones who are home from college looking down their noses, saying, 'corn.' "

"Well, last year Bob went with Chuck Mawson and they just panned the program right and left. She doesn't realize it's part of their act to be superior to any program."

"Of course, she doesn't. And it's a good thing, for they are surely working for approval. If there are derogatory remarks, they will be crushed."

"I don't think there will be any remarks. I've already had a few words with Bob on the subject. He just laughs and says we ought to be glad they even stay for the program, after the way so many of the college crowd came to the dinner and left immediately. But I can tell when he's teasing. He'll not hurt their feelings, I'm sure."

"Good. Now, I'll let you go and call Mrs. Shumaker." Blanche and I have so many things in common that it takes a real effort to stop a conversation. One thing is just likely to lead to another unless one of us pulls up short.

I HAD FINISHED talking to Mrs. Shumaker when Pete and Maia Carlson came in. She is such a charming child I always love to have her around. "Good morning, Mrs. Melton," she said, sweetly dignified as usual. "Pete has invited me to see his electric train."

"And Paul can watch, if he sits down and keeps quiet," Pete added.

At that Maia's little brother Paul peeped in from the kitchen. His eyes and nose were running, whether from the cold or from crying, I couldn't tell. "Come, Paul," said Maia, "you have spoiled the game, but do not cry any more. We do not mind." She used her handkerchief effectively, receiving a half-hearted smile in return.

"See," said Pete, "I pull this switch an' it goes the other way." He pulled off his hat and scarf and mittens, opened his coat and dropped it on the floor as he crawled around to turn another switch ahead of the engine.

"Don't you and Paul want to take your wraps off, Maia?" I asked, smiling at her.

"Thank you. I think we'd better. It will be cold when we go out again. It is too bad Paul spoiled our game outside, but it does feel good to be in the warm house. Poor Paul. He is just tired of being the ba'r."

PAUL WAS SO ENTRANCED with the train, he hardly noticed that she was undoing his coat. I was curious. "The ba'r?" I asked.

She nodded. "In Davy Crockett, you know. He says he is always the ba'r that gets shot and now he is an American he does not have to be what he does not want to be. Father told him being what you want is being American."

I smiled and agreed. Just children's games, but how truly little Paul in his own declaration of independence was upholding our proud American tradition.

"Had you a happy Christmas Day?" I asked.

"The happiest. We sang songs around the Christmas tree and had gifts and sweets. And we are going to have another when the letters come from our friends to whom we sent gifts in the camps."

"Maia! Are you going to play trains or talk to my mother all morning?" Pete was haughty but Maia only smiled. "You will have to show me," she said.

I LEFT THEM all crouching around the tracks. I'd better get my day organized before it slipped away from me. That can often happen when the children are home from school. Entering into what they are doing and just being there when they want me is so interesting that I never think of it as time lost. Still, I often have to do some fancy finagling to make up the hours.

With a bang of the kitchen door, Susie came rushing in. "Where are those cookies? The kids all want some." Her face was flaming from the cold.

"Why don't you all come in and warm up while you eat them?"

"Un-unh. We're sledding. Just give us cookies and we'll be back. You know, for lunch."

"Me, too." Karen came breezing through the kitchen on her way out. "Marilyn says I can come see her New Year's Eve dress. Be back for lunch."

THE PHONE RANG again as I stood looking after them with lifted brows. "Hi, honey," Dan's voice addressed me. "Just wanted you to know I can come home for lunch after all."

Which made it unanimous. Whatever else the family had scheduled they'd be home for lunch. I'd better look in the refrigerator quicker than quick.

PERSONAL PROBLEM CLINIC

By EARL S. RUDISILL

Wrong emphasis

QUESTION: In our junior high school they have a great many social affairs. Dancing is the big thing, and there are just too many dances. More than that, they start late and end quite late. When these kids don't get home until between twelve and one o'clock it's too much for me. We can't settle down for the night until Eileen gets in. When I complain to her she says I am the only one who complains, and I accomplish nothing.

The school authorities encourage the idea of pairing off and going steady. I regard that as nonsense for such young children. It worries me and my husband, but we seem to be helpless in the face of conditions. Of course, we could compel the girl to be in by eleven or a little later, but then she'd be the only one, and she'd feel like a martyr.

REPLY: Your complaint is that of thousands of parents over the country. The tendency is strongly toward early dating and "going steady." Some young people report that anyone who does otherwise is regarded as having something wrong with him.

Encouragement toward dating and an excess of social affairs on the part of administrators and teachers is undoubtedly given with a view to social development and promotion of the maturing process. But such encouragement spurs active girl-boy relationships too early and sets in motion processes which can be slowed down or stopped only with difficulty.

Acting singly, parents can do almost nothing about this situation, but if they act jointly they probably can exert influence. A petition, signed by most of the patrons of a school, and presented in person by the right sort of authorized representatives, who are ready to express themselves also orally, will almost certainly be effective.

Atheist?

QUESTION: I have a neighbor whose husband says he is an atheist. He is very harsh with the children and makes fun of their going to Sunday school or church. The mother wants them to be religious, but she gets no sympathy or help. Her husband refuses to talk anything over with her.

REPLY: Many persons who say they are atheists feel very uncertain and insecure, and their blustering about believing in nothing is often a mere effort to gain attention.

Arguing with such persons accomplishes nothing. It is better to leave them to their brash assertions and for the Christian partner to go his or her way, showing the blusterer kindness at every turn, being loyal to the church, taking the children to Sunday school and teaching them at home, and maintaining a pleasant atmosphere at home. The "atheist" is likely sooner or later to be influenced by the Christian example and atmosphere.

As in various other situations it may be helpful to enlist the co-operation of a number of men and women of high repute, who, when occasion offers, may say the right word or perform a strategic act of kindness. Prayer, patience and maintaining a Christian spirit are important.

New Reference Books

Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Lefferts A. Loetscher, editor-in-chief. Baker Book House. 2 vols. 1205 pages. $15.

"Monumental" is the word for this superb collection of information. Nothing to compare with it has appeared in English since the Hastings encyclopedia in 1913 or the English translation of Schaff-Herzog in 1907. Preceding the publication of this new two-volume work, the Baker Book House put on the market in 1949 a 13-volume reprint of Schaff-Herzog ($58.50). The reprint, plus the new volumes, provides a reference work which should meet the needs of students of all phases of religion.

The list of writers of the new volumes comes close to being a "Who's Who" of prominent biblical students, biographers, and historians in the church in America today. Two editors are United Lutheran professors, Dr. E. E. Flack of Hamma Divinity School and Dr. Theodore G. Tappert of the Philadelphia Seminary. Other ULC clergymen are among the 510 contributors.

Emphasis in the new volumes, of course, is on recent information in the church field, from such general subjects as "psychology of religion" and the Wahhabi movement in Islam to brief biographies of hundreds of prominent contemporary churchmen. The theological point of view in general articles is middle-of-the-road, avoiding the extremes of liberalism or fundamentalism. A study of the general articles provides a good education in present-day Christianity from a Protestant angle.

Lutheran Cyclopedia. Edited by Erwin L. Lueker. Concordia. 1160 pages. $7.50.

Scholars of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod prepared this book, based on the *Concordia Cyclopedia* of 1927 but thoroughly reworked into a massive compendium of information on the Christian church throughout the world.

The special historical and theological interests of the Missouri Synod are reflected in the book. A host of biographical entries pertain to Germans and Americans who are little known outside Lutheran circles. To this extent the book fulfills its title as a "Lutheran" cyclopedia. If you want a description of the Brief Statement adopted by the Missouri Synod in 1932 or the Savannah Resolution of the ULCA (1934) this is perhaps the only book including both.

But the range of interest transcends denominational limits. There is a competent four-column resume of Mormon history, five columns of the Pelagian controversy, three columns on biblical archaeology. The writing throughout is succinct.

The Way to Certainty

The Grandeur and Misery of Man. By David E. Roberts. Oxford University Press. 186 pages. $3.

In the introduction to this book, Dr. Paul Tillich makes a statement which the reader finds confirmed again and again. "David Roberts knew that the traditional symbols of religion and concepts of theology are empty for those who do not experience them as answers to their questions. Therefore, he began each sermon with a description of man's predicament in general, or of some special expression of it. He starts with the uncertainty about God in order to lead to a certainty in which the basic uncertainty is both preserved and overcome. The way to such certainty is not through argument but through the courage to look at ourselves and to see ourselves as we really are, or in other words, as we are in the eyes of the eternal which cannot be deceived by us. This is an example of the way in which these sermons lead from the insight into man's predicament to the question of God, and from the question of God to the divine answer which can be accepted as well as rejected by man."

The contents of this book were first delivered as sermons, yet the seasoned sermon-reader will find something missing in the absence of homiletical flourishes. Those who knew David Roberts were always impressed with his sincerity and the genuineness of what he had to say or write. He really sought for answers in his study. In these 20 sermons, selected for publication soon after his death last January, the reader finds penetrating and illuminating treatment of man's most pressing problems, together with a relevant application of the resources of divine grace.

Anyone who is looking for a healthy, forthright analysis of basic Christian concerns such as sin, forgiveness, fellowship, responsibility, freedom and love will find this book rewarding.

WILLIAM VAN HORN DAVIES
Harrisburg, Pa.

Roman Catholic Mental Health

Faith, Reason and Modern Psychiatry, Sources for a Synthesis. Edited by Francis J. Braceland. P. J. Kenedy and Sons. 310 pages. $6.

What the late Professor David Roberts did for Protestantism in his epoch-marking *Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man* the present volume attempts to do for Catholicism. Eleven Roman Catholic psychiatrists and theologians have contributed essays which vary in character from a most informative article on modern psychiatry to discussions on scholastic moral theology which are far remote from the thinking of a Protestant reader. As one might expect, the medical contributors are more receptive to present-day trends in psychiatry than the priests. Dr. Gregory Zilboorg goes furthest in his vindication of psychoanalysis. Not Freudianism but Freud, the man, misunderstood Christianity.

The medical writers are agreed that personal "wholeness" is impossible without a religious life-orientation.

The theological writers are well versed in academic psychology though their psychiatric knowledge does not always indicate real first-hand acquaintance with mental patients. They are much more fearful, at least more vociferous in their concern, about the naturalistic trend in American psychology than the physicians. This concern is by no means unfounded, though the writers seem to carry it quite far and give it occasionally an odd twist. "If this influence keeps patients away from the confessional and curtails their supernatural life, they will only be too inclined to believe the charge that religion is the main source of their unhappiness and psychic disequilibrium."

It is precisely at this point that Protestant and Catholic therapists must part company. The Protestant ideal is the growth of a reasonably integrated, mature personality under God. The Catholic psychotherapist, at least the spiritual director, seeks to achieve this integrity by guiding the patient to an acceptance of the age-old Catholic pattern of "sainthood." All the ingredients of medieval mysticism, monastic asceticism, and Thomistic intellectualism are brought to this task. It is not for us to doubt that some suffering souls who are conditioned to this approach will benefit by it. It is equally evident that this combination of symbolism and authoritarianism in which Carl Jung recognized the genius of Catholic piety will be emotionally unintelligible and scientifically unacceptable to Protestants. CARL J. SCHINDLER
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Home Devotions

Altar Fires and Family Worship. Compiled by Joe W. Burton. Broadman. 373 pages. $2.50.

This book is a year's supply of articles that appeared in the home education department of the Baptist Sunday School Board's magazine *Home Life*. Joe W. Burton, editor of the publication, has compiled them into this book for family worship.

The articles are in clear, lucid style suitable for a family with children. There is no attempt to place them in topical order, in the hope that the accidental nature of their arrangement might speak even better to the reader according to his everyday needs.

Cuyahoga Falls, O. NEVIN B. STOVER

CENTRAL STATES

Midland Appeal Evokes Encouraging Response

By PAUL C. WIEGMAN

OMAHA, NEB.—Early response to the Midland College appeal has been encouraging, Dr. Arthur M. Knudsen, director of the three-year $750,000 project, announced last month. Meetings in all parts of the Central States Synod have given evidence of the co-operation existing among congregations, and have shown that the churches have recognized the appeal as one of the major synodical projects.

Many congregations, Dr. Knudsen reported, have included the appeal in their 1956 budgets or in their benevolence plans for next year. Others have made it part of their proposals in the sector program or included it on their pledge card with the columns for current expenses and benevolences.

The Siouxland Lutheran Clothing Appeal has yielded 20,500 pounds of used clothing collected for LWR, according to Pastor Samuel W. Jensen, of South Sioux City, chairman, exceeding the 15,000-pound quota by a wide margin. The clothing was collected in a five-day period with nearly 50 Lutheran churches in the tri-state area co-operating.

The largest truckload came from churches in the Emerson and Pender area with over 2½ tons. Augustana Lutheran Church of Sioux City and First Church (ULC) of South Sioux City each brought in over 900 pounds, largest shipments from individual congregations.

First Church, North Platte, Neb., observed the 75th anniversary of its organization with a three-day celebration Nov. 18 to 20. The observance opened with a communion service at which Synod President C. H. Zeidler preached. Preachers at anniversary services were three former pastors of the church, Dr. H. A. Anspach, pastor of St. Mark's Church, Los Angeles, Calif.; the Rev. C. Franklin Koch, executive secretary of the Board of Social Missions; and the Rev. John B. Rupley, Jr., pastor of Trinity Church, Boulder, Colo.

ILLINOIS

Chicago Gets Ready For Evangelism Mission

By JOHN E. COOPERRIDER

CHICAGO—Plans are in the making for a city-wide Lutheran evangelism mission in Chicago, Feb. 17-24, 1957. Three Lutheran church bodies have thus far indicated that they will hold their missions at that time,

ULC COLLEGES received $2,055,900 from Ford Foundation grants announced this month to help raise teachers' salaries. The grants—a total of $500,000,000—went to 4,157 privately supported colleges, universities and hospitals. Church-related colleges and the amount allotted to each were:

Carthage	$112,700
Gettysburg	$263,900
Hartwick	$ 96,300
Lenoir Rhyne	$147,700
Midland	$150,100
Muhlenberg	$215,100
Newberry	$ 71,600
Roanoke	$ 88,700
Susquehanna	$108,500
Thiel	$102,500
Wagner	$266,000
Wittenberg	$432,800

Among the hospitals, Lutheran Hospital of Manhattan, N. Y., received $43,400. The Clara Maass Memorial Hospital, Newark, N. J., was awarded $47,300.

Gettysburg College also received a $4,000 grant from the DuPont fund established as an aid to education for the next academic year.

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according to Clifford Dahlin, director of the Lutheran Council of Greater Chicago.

While the various missions will be run separately by the participating church bodies, which include the ULC and the Missouri Synod, a general committee has been appointed to co-ordinate publicity and the calendar of events.

ULC representatives on the committee are Area Evangelism Director William H. Swarbrick; the secretary for evangelism of the Illinois Synod, the Rev. A. Howard Weeg; Pastors K. Bruno Neumann and Ray C. Shawl of the Illinois Synod, and Pastors Walter E. Wittman and Andrew Swasko of the Wartburg Synod.

An area meeting for all pastors of the Illinois, Wartburg, and Slovak-Zion synods was held Dec. 12-13 at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago. Purpose of the meeting, directed by Pastor Swarbrick, was to introduce pastors to the ULC evangelism program in 1956-57, and the part they will play in it.

LUTHERAN HOME FINDING SOCIETY of Illinois held its 50th anniversary dinner, Nov. 18, at the Palmer House in Chicago. Nearly 500 persons heard Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois.

The home was originally started by a small group of Norwegian Lutherans, but over the years has become the official foster home agency of National Lutheran Council churches in Illinois.

More than 4,000 children have been cared for or placed in foster, or adoptive, homes over the 50 years, 398 of them this year. The home also cares for unwed mothers.

The Lutheran Council of Greater Chicago was recently promised added support for its many activities by the organization of a ladies' auxiliary which will provide volunteer help for its city-wide salvage service, its Lutheran overseas service, and "Lutheran nights" at the USO in Chicago.

Officers of the new organization include Mrs. H. P. Swanson (Aug.), president; Mrs. C. Gruber (ALC), first vice president; Mrs. H. D. Fawley (Mo.), second vice president; Mrs. A. Scholes (ULCA), recording secretary; Mrs. E. Dahl (ELC), corresponding secretary; and Mrs. M. Huff (ALC), treasurer.

The 1955 All-Lutheran Food Appeal in Illinois for Lutheran World Relief has thus far brought in 20 railroad carloads of shelled corn which were shipped to the processing center in Decatur.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE of the Illinois Synod met Nov. 15-16 at St. Paul's Church, Metropolis, the Rev. Roger P. Burchett pastor. Officers elected are: the Rev. Frank L. Kirchner, Zion Church, Mt. Carmel, president; the Rev. R. K. Markwald, Salem Church, Jonesboro, vice president; the Rev. Leland C. Ogan, Advent Church, St. Louis, secretary; and Russell L. Dillow, of Dongola, treasurer.

The annual home missions pastors' conference of the Illinois Synod was held Nov. 29 in Chicago. Speakers included President

STREAMLINED GROUNDBREAKING launched building project of Wooddale Church, St. Louis Park, Minn., where Pastor Paul J. Obenauf and Building Committee Chairman Tres Goetting mounted a bulldozer to move earth for new church building. Congregation sold old church, school barracks, and parsonage, which were moved away by buyers, and uses same two-acre tract to construct contemporary church.

LUTHERANS FROM MANY COUNTRIES worked together to make evangelism mission in Los Angeles area an outstanding success which brought 1,144 new members to 112 co-operating congregations. Representatives of five countries appeared in native costumes during mission week to emphasize bonds uniting churches of various national origins. Girls are Mary Jane Hast, Norway; Betty Brehm, Germany; Gail Annala, Finland; Dorothy Olson, Denmark; Astrid Anderson, Sweden.

Harmon J. McGuire, Secretary for Evangelism A. Howard Weeg, Synodical Mission Pastor George H. Hoog, and Pastors E. A. Wendt, Robert J. Schenck, William E. Kmet, and Delno Sahs. The conference discussed the home mission pastor's public relations program, parish practice, and program of lay calling. Prof. Robert H. Fischer of the Maywood Seminary concluded the program, speaking on "A Reasonable Luther."

Sheriff Joseph Lohman of Cook County, speaking at the November meeting of the Lutheran Ministers' Association of Chicago, pointed out the growing importance of crime prevention and the need for strict law enforcement in dealing with juvenile offenders.

Unity Church, Chicago, the Rev. Paul P. Kuenning pastor, held 50th anniversary celebrations in October and November. Speakers included Dr. McGuire, and a former pastor of the congregation, the Rev. Millard H. Stiles, now pastor of Reen Memorial Church, St. Louis.

Redeemer Church, Aurora, the Rev. Martin J. Zulauf pastor; Reen Memorial Church, St. Louis, and Our Saviour's Church, Arlington Heights, the Rev. John P. Peterson pastor, recently purchased parsonages. Zion Church, Loogootee, the Rev. Thomas L. Auer pastor, held ground-breaking services for a new parsonage.

NORTH CAROLINA

Conference Football Crown Won by Lenoir Rhyne College

By FRANK K. EFIRD

SALISBURY—Lenoir Rhyne College clinched the North State Conference football championship with a 34-7 victory over its arch rival, Catawba, Thanksgiving Day. Last year the same teams were battling for the conference cellar. Lenoir Rhyne won eight games on its schedule and had a 13-13 tie with Newberry, the South Carolina Lutheran college. Lenoir Rhyne and Newberry met again Dec. 10 in the Palmetto Bowl at Columbia, S. C., to decide the Southern Lutheran football championship. Lenoir Rhyne won, 14-13.

The Lutheran evangelism program will soon be in full swing in North Carolina. A synodical Missioner's Training School is scheduled at Emmanuel Church, High Point, Jan. 4-5. The synod will have seven area missions in 1956-1957.

The schedule is: Greensboro area, Jan. 22-27, Dr. J. L. Norris, chairman; Salisbury area, Feb. 5-9, the Rev. Harold Terry, chairman; Jacksonville-Wilmington area, June 24-29, the Rev. David Johnson, chairman; Raleigh area, Jan. 13-18, 1957, the Rev. J. D. Mauney, Jr., chairman; Gastonia area, Jan. 27-31, 1957, the Rev. W. Leo Smith, chairman; Concord area, Feb. 10-15, 1957, the Rev. George R. Whittecar, chairman; Hickory area, Feb. 24-March 1, 1957, the Rev. G. Dwight Conrad, chairman.

Many new churches and parish buildings have been erected in recent years by rural congregations in Rowan county. Typical of this building program is the new educational building of St. Paul's Church near Salisbury. It has an auditorium that will seat 350, a modern kitchen, and Sunday school departments from primary through young people. Back of the church, on spacious grounds, is a recreation building and park. The congregation, organized in 1830 with 17 members, has today 700 confirmed members, and 541 enrolled in Sunday school. The Rev. L. C. Bumgarner is pastor.

RESERVED FOR BABIES was a special service at St. Paul's Church, Summer Hill, Pa., during which Pastor C. A. Steigerwalt baptized seven children last month. It was the largest number he had ever baptized at one time in his 28 years of service in the three-congregation Friedensburg parish.

THE GUESTS WERE BIDDEN: Members of Zion Church, Canton, Ohio, at loyalty dinner

OHIO

All-Out Effort Doubles Pledge of Canton Congregation

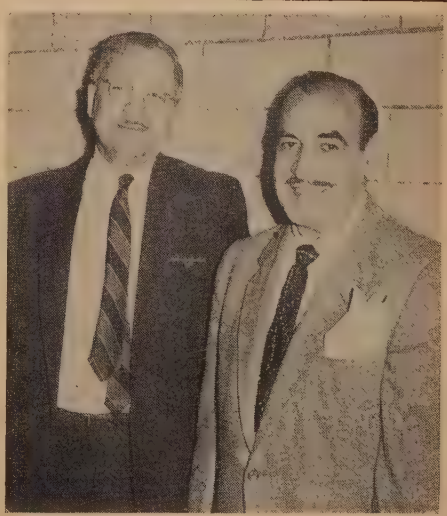
By E. RUDOLPH WALBORN

CANTON—Thanksgiving services acquired a special meaning for members of Zion Church, Canton, and their pastor, the Rev. Tom B. Homrighausen. It was on that occasion that the result of Zion's "Double-the-Budget" campaign was announced: Pledges amounted to 102 per cent of the $80,248 goal.

The success of the drive meant that Zion will be able to begin building a $500,000 church on a new location next spring. The congregation's regular 1956 budget was $42,248. But $40,000 more was needed to prepare for relocation for which a $200,000 fund is already available. Several acres in a rapidly developing area of the city have been purchased.

The campaign was launched at a congregational dinner to which fifty hostesses personally invited all confirmed members. Five hundred came. Speakers explained the needs of the church. A brochure outlined the budget and building fund requirements.

Following the dinner, fifty teams went out to call on every member and collect pledges. They presented progress reports of their



A COMMUNITY SAID THANK YOU to Dr. Andor M. Leffler, for 22 years pastor of First Hungarian Lutheran Church in Cleveland, who retired last month to devote himself to writing and radio work. The Budapest-born minister received the greetings of Cleveland Mayor A. J. Celebrezze (right) at a testimonial dinner, and, among other tributes, a message from Governor Frank Lausche praising him for his service and devotion to "church, state and fellow man."

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work at four consecutive meetings. At the end of the campaign, $82,175 had been pledged.

An every-member visitation program got its start at Redeemer Church, Toledo, last month when Pastor Ewald C. Berger called on members of the congregation to take his place in the pulpit and report on the activities of the church.

Eight Ohio Synod pastors observed their 25th anniversary of ordination in November. They are Pastors Frederick M. Otto, St. Mark's, Fremont; Lorin L. Spenny, Lewisburg parish; Herbert F. Hamburger, St. John's, Ingomar; Howard M. Hauter, Crouse Memorial Church, Tiro; John E. Hofer, Norwood, Cincinnati; Joseph M. O'Morrow, Holy Trinity, Columbus; Dana H. Johnson, Fourth, Springfield; J. Henry Weissrock, St. Paul, Lynchburg.

Miss Blanche Fraser has served as financial secretary of Fourth Church, Springfield for 25 years. Among her other duties she was treasurer of the congregation's missionary society and conference missionary society statistician.

Over 2,000 children in Trinity Church Akron, have studied under Mrs. Faye Fulton who retired after teaching Sunday schoo for 34 years.

John H. Harrington, of North Riverdale Church, Dayton, a former factory manager has accepted the superintendency of Bethany Village. The former superintendent, Pastor Russell Bussabarger, is now a mission developer in Lancaster.

Pastor Dana H. Johnson of Fourth Church, Springfield, will preach in England next summer in an exchange program which will bring a British preacher to Springfield.

Carlton Hyler Lewis, a construction engineer, was named "Layman of the Year" by his congregation, St. Mark's, Fairborn.

HOME MISSIONS

MARYLAND. Development of a new mission at Aspen Hills will be financed entirely by Luther Place Church of Washington, including full salary for the mission developer.

SOUTH CAROLINA. St. Timothy's Church, Whitmire, does not need an item for insurance in its budget. A local industry has provided a group-insurance policy for all churches and parsonages in the community.

ILLINOIS. Resurrection Church, Franklin Park, has started a third Sunday morning service to handle increased attendances. Miss Lida Neal has been added to the congregation's staff as parish worker.

VIRGINIA. Nine refugees sponsored in seven months is the record of Advent Church, Arlington, with three more expected before the end of the year. The Rev. Henry M. Schumann also developed a notable refugee-sponsoring program in his previous parish at Saugerties, N. Y.

VIRGIN ISLANDS. Though these former Danish possessions are now English-speaking, influx of Puerto Ricans has required start of Spanish-language Lutheran services. Pastor Miguel Sevilla was greeted by 260 worshipers on the first Sunday.

ONTARIO. The annual Finnish Canadian song festival at Toronto was augmented by a special service conducted by Pastor Kyosti Toppila in Agricola Church with 1,050 attending.

NEW JERSEY. Pastor John H. Wagner, Jr., whose mission congregation at Lavalette was organized on Nov. 27, found it easy to make hospital calls for a few days. The reason—his wife was in the hospital, along with a newly arrived Wagner.

NORTH DAKOTA. Special mission work among Mexican migrant workers in the Red River valley will be undertaken next summer. Purpose will be to encourage mutual interest between the migrants and the many Lutheran churches in the area.

MARYLAND. New mission at Lexington Park gathered its equipment from many sources. One item was a spinet piano lent by a local tavern.

PENNSYLVANIA

Church Discovers Its Strength As Laymen Lead in Evangelism

By WILLIAM C. ROEGER

NORRISTOWN—St. Paul's Church, Telford, is one of the conference parishes that has been using the "King's Men" program of the Brotherhood. This year it was followed for nine Sundays in October and November, and had four outstanding results. Increase in attendance over the same period in 1954 was 48 per cent. The congregation's income for the same period showed a 41 per cent increase. It became necessary to hold an additional service on Sunday mornings.

A significant result was that it caused the congregation to scrap its building plans in midstream. Previous plans for which architect's drawings were completed included only additions to the educational plant of the church. The "King's Men" program forced the congregation to revise its plans to include a new church building as well.

A Nativity scene containing 16 life-size figures built by St. Paul's Brotherhood was dedicated at a "Family Church Night."

A pre-Advent retreat for pastors was held by the conference in St. John's Church, Centre Square. Papers were read by Dr. William M. Horn and Dr. William O. Moyer of Philadelphia. In the same week, Norristown Conference pastors together with those from the Philadelphia and German conferences attended an all-day meeting at St. Mark's Church, Conshohocken, to plan for the conference's participation in the United Lutheran Church's "Evangelism Year." Speakers included representatives from the Board of Social Missions' Department of Evangelism.

Members of St. John's Church, Ambler, organized a surprise party for their pastor, Paul R. Wertman, to mark his 25th year in the ministry, his 25th wedding anniversary, and his birthday. People from every area of the pastor's past experience were present to help celebrate the occasion.

CHILDREN of St. Peter's Church, Hilltown, Pa., gave flannelboard to Missionary Shirley Fok for use of kindergarten pupils in Hong Kong.

Dr. Millard Gladfelter, provost of Temple University, Philadelphia, and president of the Board of Higher Education of the ULCA, was speaker at the banquet of the Norristown Conference Luther League in Lansdale. Hundreds of leaguers attended.

Pastor Robert Nagle of the Church of Our Saviour, Coatesville, officiated recently at the dedication of a "Meditation Room" in the new $1,000,000 "War Memorial Wing" of the Coatesville general hospital. The local Jewish rabbi joined in the dedication of the room which features twin altars, Christian and Jewish. Sponsored by the Chester Valley Ministerial Association, the room, unique in its two-altar provision, is known as a "Room for All Men." Included in the furnishings, costing nearly $2,000, are facilities for clergymen to counsel with patients and relatives. The dedication services were attended by religious and civic leaders and hospital officials.

After completing her studies in this country, Miss Shirley Fok visited St. Peter's Church at Hilltown before returning to Hong Kong, where she assists Missionary Charles Reinbrecht who receives financial support from this congregation. In the kindergarten

PA.: NORRISTOWN . . .

department of the church school she was impressed by the teaching of the lesson with flannel-backed pictures on a board. She told the children that this dance would help her in teaching her Chinese pupils. The children decided to do something about it. Saving their birthday pennies, they bought picture stories about birth and boyhood of Jesus, and sent them to her for use in Hong Kong.

Centennial services were conducted by St. Mark's Church, Pennsburg, a congregation of the Norristown Conference, between May and December. Since the church was organized in 1855, fifteen of its members were ordained to the ministry. Among them are Dr. Earl S. Erb, executive secretary of the ULC Board of Foreign Missions, and Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, founder of the Moral Rearmament movement. The latter is a native of Pennsburg. Both were among the speakers at special services marking the 100th anniversary. Other former sons of the congregation who preached were Pastors M. A. Kurtz, J. A. Schofer, J. B. Mohr, K. S. Ensminger, and H. M. Kistler.

The *Martin Luther* film, purchased by a number of congregations in the conference, has been playing to large audiences in many communities . . . With the co-operation of local United Lutheran Church Women groups, the Women's Committee of the Norristown Conference for the Board of Inner Missions has been gathering a large supply of gift articles which will be distributed at Christmas to patients and guests in hospitals and institutions on the conference territory.

Bethel Church Clinic Moves to New Quarters

By CARL W. WEBER

PHILADELPHIA — A new chapter in the story of Bethel Church's health clinic began this month. The clinic, opened eight years ago in the church basement, moved into a building purchased and remodeled by the Philadelphia congregation for this purpose.

Over 1,600 children have been under the care of the clinic during the past years. An average of 35 appear each Wednesday afternoon for check-ups and treatment. Some ten physicians (none of them Lutheran) give their services. Pharmaceutical houses contribute medical supplies. Free tuberculosis tests on Saturday mornings have been added recently to the services offered to the community by the church clinic.

REFORMATION CHURCH BUILDS NEW UNIT
Dr. Winters with shovel, and (from left) Mr. Waxbom, Pastors Ernst and Edward Knapp

New director is Dr. Alfred Green. He replaced Dr. Arthur Snyder, founder of the clinic, who moved to Florida recently. Eight women of the congregation assist the doctors, receive patients, keep records.

Dedication of the building, which consists of a large room on the first floor and four rooms on the second, was Dec. 11. Pastor Ivan H. Hagedorn led the ceremony.

Total expense for purchase and remodeling of the building were $18,000, $2,000 of which was contributed by freewill offerings of clinic patients. Men of the church gave their labor to hold expenses down. The rooms will be used on Sundays for Bible classes and fellowship gatherings. Next project of Bethel Church, still in the planning stage, is a health clinic for older people.

PASTORS of the Philadelphia Conference attended a training school in evangelism a

PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

St. Mark's Church, Conshohocken, in November. Also in November was a three-day Philadelphia area Sunday school convention at the Baptist Temple, Philadelphia, and the convention of the Women's Missionary Society at Zion Church, Olney.

Prince of Peace Church, Philadelphia, dedicated electronic chimes given in memory of several former members of the church . . . Full-time assistant pastor at St. John's Church, Overbrook, will be James H. Austin, Jr., due to graduate from Philadelphia Seminary next month.

St. Simeon's Church, Philadelphia, opened a "canteen" for teen-agers in the fall. It offers movies, games, dancing and snacks. Admission is by membership card. Adults supervise the activities . . . Immanuel Church, Lansdowne, has scheduled special services to celebrate its 50th anniversary this year.

Area missions for the Philadelphia Conference have been scheduled for Oct. 28, 1956. The Norristown Conference will follow Feb. 10, 1957. The mission for the Pottsville Conference opens Jan. 22, 1956. Wilkes-Barre follows Feb. 5.

Grace Church, West Philadelphia, has developed into a Protestant community church center. Church activities and community programs fill the building five days a week. An informal afternoon Vesper service has been added to the morning worship on Sundays. Pastor is the Rev. R. L. Wagner.

LAYMEN HEED CALL TO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

THE MEN following the Pittsburgh Synod's invitation to "Christian fellowship, inspiration, and guidance" at a retreat on the Thiel College campus in Greenville, Pa., came from all walks of life—lawyers and farmers, physicians and craftsmen, shopkeepers and bankers. They gathered during the Thanksgiving week-end, over eighty of them, and listened to Dr. Henry Endress, executive director of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship, and Dr. Carveth P. Mitchell, pastor of First English Church, Mansfield, Ohio, and a member of the ULC Board of Social Missions.

Discussing the "two sides to Christianity," both speakers offered three lectures each. Dr. Endress spoke on stewardship, Dr. Mitchell on evangelism. Group discussions followed. Retreat chaplain was Dr. Edward K. Rogers, synod secretary of evangelism.

Minister's Action Fills Gap in Town's Library

When Pastor Ralph R. Hellerich of St. John's Church, Woodbury, N. J. went to his town's public library to obtain source material on the doctrine of Christian churches, he found that there were almost no books on the subject available. Here is what he told THE LUTHERAN *about his discovery and about the action he took to remedy the situation:*

"I WAS SHOCKED when I discovered that there was only one book on Luther (*Here I Stand,* by Roland H. Bainton) in our local library!

"The discovery came about in this way. Our Bible class was discussing the teachings and practices of the other branches of Christendom. We were particularly interested in discovering how these teachings compared with those of the Lutheran Church. While there were a few books in my own library, I felt the need for further information about other denominations. I went to our local library, and was surprised to find only very few books discussing the doctrinal position of the various Christian groups. There was only a single book dealing with the whole field of Luther, the Reformation period, Lutheran history, and Lutheran teaching and practice. A consultation with the librarian verified the verdict of the card file.

"Now, while Woodbury is a relatively small town (approximately 12,000 population) and has only two small Lutheran congregations, it was my feeling that this condition should be remedied. When brought to the attention of Pastor Elwood Dietz, at Trinity Church, his feelings were the same as mine. We therefore decided to take action. He mentioned the matter to his Brotherhood, and they contributed $15 for the purchase of books. Our church council also

Deptford Institute Free Library of Woodbury, N. J., receives collection of books from Pastors Elwood Dietz (left) and Ralph Hellerich. Canon Robert Williams and Miss Dorothy M. Thompson, librarian, accept the volumes contributed by the town's two Lutheran churches.

discussed the matter and decided to contribute a like amount.

"Now came the difficult job. Out of all the books which could possibly be chosen, which were most important? After all, we were limited to $30. Here is a list of the books we finally selected:

Luther's Life, Ingeborg Stolee
Three Treatises, Martin Luther
A Lutheran Handbook, A. J. Traver
The Martin Luther Christmas Book, Roland H. Bainton
A Compend of Luther's Theology, Hugh T. Kerr, Jr.
A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, A. R. Wentz
Common Service Book
Road to Reformation, Heinrich Boehmer
Day by Day We Magnify Thee, M. Steiner and P. Scott
Studies in the Lutheran Confessions, W. D. Allbeck

"The rest was easy. After making the necessary arrangements with the librarian and the board, an official presentation was made. The Rev. Canon Robert G. Williams, chairman of the library board, received the books from our hands. It is our hope that for years to come inquirers will have no difficulty in finding answers to questions concerning our Lutheran Church!"

PENNSYLVANIA

Himmelman Calls Notice To Shortage of Ministers

By LUTHER E. FACKLER

PITTSBURGH—"There is no more serious problem confronting our synod," says Dr. G. L. Himmelman, president of the Pittsburgh Synod, "than the shortage of pastors to serve our congregations. At the present time there are 19 pastoral charges without a pastor, and only nine seminarians coming up for ordination in June."

The number of needed pastors might well be higher because in addition to present vacancies there are new fields awaiting development. The seriousness of the problem is increased by the fact that congregations want pastors who are not over forty, and definitely not over 45 years of age, the president said. The demand for young pastors leads to the uprooting of young men who are doing well in their first charges and ought not to be disturbed by the enticement of greater challenges. The competition of young pastors works injustice to the aging pastor, whose spirit would be improved if given a new challenge; injury to the young man, who is not given full opportunity to mature under lighter responsibility; and loss to the whole church through speedy turnover of men before their parish programs are properly completed.

"Next to prayer in behalf of an adequate ministry is personal selection of not only the volunteer, but rather of the type of boy whose gifts and graces promise the equality

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PA.: PITTSBURGH . . .
of consecrated manhood the church i searching out for its pulpits today," Dr Himmelman concluded.

THE SYNODICAL BROTHERHOOD this year i promoting the "King's Men" program. Th first institute for the training of lay leader and instructors has been held. Four work shops have been conducted throughout th synod. A number of men are now prepare to go into the local Brotherhoods and assis with the program.

IN AN EFFORT to make church choirs an church music a more effective part of th church service, a series of choral clinics wi be held in the synod from January throug April. These programs will be sponsored b Thiel College and the Pittsburgh Synod Professors Marlowe Johnson and Hele Lingelbach of Thiel College, Pastor Warre Riggs and Mr. G. Logan McElvaney A.A.O.G., of Pittsburgh, will conduct eac clinic. A double quartet from the colleg will also be present.

The program will cover choir organiza tion and its problems; conducting; sigh reading for church choir; role of the organ ist in choral service. The first conferenc will be held in Greensburg, Jan. 14.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON is "Sunday schoo time" for youngsters in Terrace Village N 2, Pittsburgh. Several years ago, a Bibl study class was begun by Sister Edit Fischer. Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Lewis opene their home to the project which now enrol more than 50 children.

Each week the living room is filled wit students from pre-school to junior high Occasionally, friends help provide treats o holidays. The Wednesday afternoon Sun day school is an example of the missionar spirit among members of First Church Pittsburgh.

During the Christmas recess, pastors wi come to the Thiel campus for a mission training school. Under the direction o Stewardship Secretary Edward K. Roge and Regional Director Francis B. Myers, th pastors will learn about the church's forth coming evangelism program.

—Changes of Pastorate—

CANADA

HAASE, EARL. From Arnprior-Northcote parish, Ont. To Grace Church, Hamilton.

LUETKEHOELTER, H. W. From Edmonton, Alta., to Montreal, Quebec, German immigration work.

MILLER, JOHN. From Mount Zion Church, Litchfield, Ill. To Faith Church, Hamilton, Ont.

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

MCDANIEL, LEE A. From Gettysburg Seminary (student). To Trinity Church, Sunbury.

SCHLOTZHAUER, EARL H. From Upper Muhlenberg parish. To Upper Bermudian parish.

MARYLAND

HARTZELL, RAYMOND. From Gettysburg Seminary (student). To North Bethesda area, Board of American Missions.

PACIFIC

NELSON, NORMAN B. From Redemption Church, Milwaukee, Wis. To St. Matthew's Church, Spokane, Wash.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST

WELCHERT, WERNER. From Trinity Church, Papillion, Neb. To Saratoga-El Quita Park, Calif., mission developer.

PENNSYLVANIA MINISTERIUM

HARTMAN, ORVAL C. From St. John's Church, Hatboro. To Levittown area, mission developer; and Director of Home Missions.

JOHNSON, HARRY N. From Philadelphia Seminary (student). To Advocate Church, Philadelphia, assistant pastor.

MOORE, LEWIS D. From Redeemer Church, Penndel. To Heidelberg-Slatedale parish.

REESER, CLARENCE D., JR. From Longswamp parish. To Redeemer Church, Reading, assistant pastor.

YOUSE, PAUL M. From Georgia, Board of American Missions. To Grace Church, E. Bangor. 19 E. High St.

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DEPARTURES

REINBRECHT, JANET. To Lutheran Mission Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. Oct.

REBER, EARL W. To Lutheran Mission, Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. Oct. 15.

DECEASED

THE REV. JACOB S. KISTLER, 78 pastor emeritus of Grace Church, East Stroudsburg, Pa., died Nov. 16 at his home in St. Petersburg, Fla. Born in West Penn Township, Pa., he graduated from Muhlenberg College and Philadelphia Seminary and was ordained in 1905. His only pastorate was at the East Stroudsburg parish. He retired in 1947.

Pastor Kistler leaves his wife, the former Lulu Mae Sittler; two daughters, Mrs. Louise Elizabeth Serfass and Mrs. Ruth Esther Snyder, and four grandchildren.

The funeral service was held in Grace Church, East Stroudsburg, Nov. 21 by Pastors William F. Wunder and Ralph R. Harrzell. Interment was at Prospect Cemetery, East Stroudsburg.

THE REV. PATRICK HENRY WILLIAMS, 67, died Nov. 16 at Greenbelt, Md. He had been retired for several years.

Born in Mount Williams, Va., the Rev. Mr. Williams attended Roanoke College and Gettysburg Seminary, and served pastorates at Hampstead, East Riverdale and Union Bridge, all of the Maryland Synod. Later he entered secular employment, but served as supply pastor of St. John's, East Riverdale.

Surviving are his wife, the former Ruth Richter; three sons, Pastor Robert Williams, James H., and John Paul; two daughters, Mrs. Betty Jane Rupp and Naomi; three brothers, two sisters, and five grandchildren.

The funeral service was held Nov. 28 at Greenbelt Community Church by Pastor Musser D. White of St. John's Church, East Riverdale, and Pastor Braund of the Community Church. Interment was at Arlington Memorial Cemetery.

When You Come to Florida

These congregations of the Florida Synod cordially invite you to worship with them . . .

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W. J. Moretz, Pastor—Phone 2-5322
The Service, 8:45 & 11; Sunday School, 10

CLEARWATER
ST. PAUL'S, Skycrest Elementary School
Paul M. Kinports, D.D., Pastor—Phone 32-0731
The Service, 10:45; Sunday School, 9:30

CORAL GABLES
ST. MARK'S, Bird and LeJeune Roads
W. Baxter Weant, Pastor—Phone MO 6-6700
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

DAYTONA BEACH
RESURRECTION, N. Ridgewood at Fairview Ave.
Douglas F. Wessell, Pastor—Phone CL 2-3992
The Service, 9:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:30

FORT LAUDERDALE
CHRIST, 2417 NE. 18th Avenue
Charles F. Steck, Jr., Pastor—Phone LO 4-2228
The Service, 8 & 11; Sunday School, 9:30

GAINESVILLE
OUR SAVIOUR'S, 1835 NW. First Avenue
William C. Kaiser, Pastor—Phone 9795
The Service, 9 & 11; Sunday School, 10

HOLLYWOOD
ST. JOHN'S, U.S. Hwy. No. 1 at Buchanan St.
Robert E. Grefe, Pastor—Phone 2-5111
The Service, 9:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:15

JACKSONVILLE
ST. JOHN'S, 1950 Silver Street
C. F. H. Krueger, D.D., Pastor—Phone EL 6-4545
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:30

JACKSONVILLE
ST. MARK'S, 3976 Hendricks Avenue
Paul K. Nordsiek, Pastor—Phone FL 9-9608
The Service, 8:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:40

JACKSONVILLE
ST. MATTHEW'S, Cleck Street (Arlington)
J. D. Sheppard, Pastor—Phone EX 8-8580
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

MIAMI
HOLY TRINITY, 200 SW. 8th Avenue
Charles J. Harris, Pastor—Phone HI 6-1743
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

MIAMI
ST. PAUL'S, 3360 West Flagler Street
Carsten H. Ludder, Pastor
The Service, 9:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:30

MIAMI BEACH
EPIPHANY, 9550 Harding Avenue
Luther A. Thomas, D.D., Pastor—Phone JE 8-6561
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 10

MIAMI SHORES
ADVENT, 10390 NE. 2nd Avenue
Ben D. Varner, Pastor—Phone PL 7-5145
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

NEW SMYRNA BEACH
TRINITY, 202 Riverside Drive
Joseph Huntley, Pastor—Phone 128
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

ORLANDO-WINTER PARK
ST. JOHN'S, Killarney School
William C. Schaeffer, D.D., Pastor—Phone 5-6522
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

RIVIERA BEACH-LAKE PARK
ST. JOHN'S, Riviera Beach Theatre
Arthur P. Snyder, Pastor—Phone 4-1920
The Service, 11; Sunday School, 9:45

ST. PETERSBURG
CHRIST, Northeast High School
Robert G. Walker, Pastor—Phone 33-0650
The Service, 10:45; Sunday School, 9:30

ST. PETERSBURG
TRINITY, 5th Street at 4th Avenue, North
H. V. Kahlenberg, D.D., Pastor—Phone 7-6798
The Service, 9:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:15

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Andrew F. Theisz, Pastor—Phone 32-4331
The Service, 8:30 & 11; Sunday School, 9:45

WEST PALM BEACH
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Paul E. Arnold, Th.D., Pastor—Phone 8556
The Service, 8:45 & 11; Sunday School, 9:45

Attend a Lutheran Church on YOUR vacation

IN CONCLUSION . . . . . .

IT WAS ONCE NECESSARY for me to attend the whole of a trial in which a young man was found guilty of murder. The young man's father, a respected and honorable person, was present all through the trial, and heard the terrible evidence of his son's deeds.

During a recess in the trial I saw the father walk up beside his son and put his arm across the young man's shoulder. He was standing with this criminal—he seemed to say—with unfailing parental love, sharing the shame and guilt.

It seemed to me like a parable of God's limitless love for his sinful human children. The father in the courtroom could do nothing to remove his son's guilt or save him from execution. The eternal Father can save his children, by sharing with them the tragedy and penalty of sin.

THIS MAY STRIKE you as a grim sort of way to think of Christmas when carefree merriment is the spirit of the season. But Christmas survives through the centuries as a day of supreme joy because it is more than a happy holiday. It announces that the eternal God has come to stand with his children in their human darkness and save them from the consequences of their sins.

Here is something so fantastic, unbelievable, that it should stun us with surprise each time we think of it: the hidden God, so far beyond the limits of our imagination, was born in human life, became a human Child to save us from the condemnation we have brought upon ourselves. This is the Christian faith, simple and startling, contrary to any sort of scientific theory, beyond the reaches of philosophical conjecture.

Here is the dividing line between believers and nonbelievers—God was born in Jesus, to rescue us from death. Tho who know this in their deepest though are the Christians.

Of course we celebrate this Christm festival with all the joy of which we a capable, in the same spirit the chimes heaven resounded above Bethlehem. He is the central event in man's history earth—the everlasting Light breaki through the darkness of our human sto of hurt and heartbreak, illness, accident and death. Our ancient burden of sorro is lifted from us. The road ahead is mac straight. God has come to us.

MAYBE YOU DIDN'T give or get all t presents you expected this Christma and perhaps you are tired out from t festival preparations. A lot of gifts w have to go back to the store in exchan for the right color or size. The childre may have been overexcited. In a wea moment you might wish Christmas cou be abolished by constitutional amen ment.

It would be good for a lot of us to c down on the conventional pleasantri which have got tied in with this great da Christmas should be a day that lifts far above the level of ordinary days. rolls in like a fresh tide of faith, lifting above all weariness. Our Saviour h come.

Of course we say "Merry Christma to every friend we meet on Dec. 25. W say it so often we may seem to forg what it means. But we haven't really fo gotten. We have unfathomable reaso for joy. The Lord has come. This is t good news which cancels out all the di mal and discouraging things that happe in the world. We Christians have goo reason for being cheerful on Christma

—ELSON RUFF

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I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man
I would do my part,—
Yet what can I give Him:
Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti

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